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PART VIII.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

IN THE

ASIATIC PROVINCES OF TURKEY.

141

1884.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
1	Earl of Dufferin ..	689	Dec. 19, 1883	Brigandage at Trebizond. Energy of Sirri Pasha in dealing with	1
2	„ „ ..	690	21,	Djemil Pasha at Aleppo. Difficulty of getting rid of	1
3	Consul Dennis ..	52	28,	Brigands at Smyrna	2
4	To Earl of Dufferin ..	21	Jan. 15, 1884	Djemil Pasha. Approves note in No. 2 ..	4
5	Earl of Dufferin ..	704	Dec. 31, 1883	Laz brigands near Trebizond	4
6	„ „ ..	3	Jan. 7, 1884	Lawlessness of Kurds near Diarbekir ..	7
7	„ „ ..	17	16,	Case of Ohannes Vartabed at Van. His release	8
8	„ „ ..	18 Confidential	16,	Laz brigandage near Trebizond. Sirri Pasha's Report	9
9	„ „ ..	37	Feb. 4,	Russian activity in Caucasus. From Mr. Eyres	10
10	„ „ ..	10	25,	Vali of Van dismissed	11
11	„ „ ..	Telegraphic 56	18,	Brigandage in Hodourtchour, near Trebizond. Sirri Pasha's Report	11
12	„ „ ..	67	25,	Extends No. 10..	12
13	„ „ ..	77	Mar. 4,	Vali of Van is to be superseded	12
14	„ „ ..	85	8,	Reports on Vilayets of Erzeroum, Van, Hakkiari, and Bitlis. From Colonel Everett and Mr. Eyres	12
15	To Earl of Dufferin ..	104	27,	Approves communicating above to Porte ..	30
16	Earl of Dufferin ..	122	Apr. 12,	Russian influence in Hakkiari. From Mr. Eyres	30
17	„ „ ..	133	22,	Governors of Bitlis and Van dismissed ..	31
18	„ „ ..	149	May 3,	Protestant schools in Armenia and Asia Minor. Conversations with Assim Pasha.. ..	31
19	„ „ ..	151	3,	Karahissar and Kerassond road. *Pro-memorid* given to Assim Pasha	32
20	„ „ ..	153	4,	Catholicos of Etchmiazin. As to election of ..	33
21	To Earl of Dufferin ..	150	14,	Approves action in No. 19	33
22	Consul-General Perry.	7	14,	Reported emigration of Circassians into Turkey	34
23	Earl of Dufferin ..	161	11,	Defterdar of Van dismissed. Reference to No. 17	34
24	„ „ ..	162	11,	Armenians of Albak withdrawn from desire expressed by them and Nestorians to adopt Orthodoxy	34
25	„ „ ..	173	21,	Kerassond-Karahissar road. Has given Porte *pro-memorid* respecting	35
26	„ „ ..	177	25,	New Valis of Van and Hakkiari. Colonel Everett's impression respecting	35
27	„ „ ..	Confidential 178	25,	Improvement in Vilayet of Angora since Aziz Pasha was Governor-General	36
28	„ „ ..	212 Confidential	27,	Armenians imprisoned at Erzeroum. Release of some and mitigation of others' punishment through his efforts	37
29	„ „ ..	222	July 10,	Poll tax levied in Erzeroum for first time ..	38
30	„ „ ..	223	10,	Armenians released. Reference to No. 28 ..	38
31	„ „ ..	236	17,	Release of four brigands at Van. Note to Porte	38
32	„ „ ..	244 Confidential	24,	Reference to No. 30. Release of Armenians. Colonel Everett's Report inclosed ..	39
33	„ „ ..	246	24,	Christian zaptiehs in North Aleppo replaced by Mussulmans	40
34	To Earl of Dufferin ..	240	Aug. 5,	Release of Van brigands. Approves note in No. 31	40
35	Earl of Dufferin ..	263	7,	Affairs at Zeitoun	40
36	„ „ ..	253	July 28,	Affairs at Zeitoun. Representations to Porte, and instructions to Consul at Aleppo ..	41
37	„ „ ..	257	Aug. 1,	Nestorians at Shemdina are emigrating to Russia, owing to Kurdish persecutions. Has called Porte's serious attention to .	41
38	„ „ ..	261	7,	Deplorable condition of Vilayet of Diarbekir brought to knowledge of Porte .. .	42
39	To Earl of Dufferin ..	252	20,	Zeitoun. Approves action mentioned in No. 36	43
40	„ „ ..	255	20,	Vilayet of Diarbekir. Approves action reported in No. 38	43

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
41	To Earl of Dufferin ..	256	Aug. 20, 1884	Nestorians at Shemdina. Approves action reported in No. 37	43
42	Earl of Dufferin ..	290	30,	Poll tax in Erzeroum. Consequent emigration to Persian frontier, and request for Persian territory	44
43	" " ..	295	Sept. 3,	Zeitoun condition satisfactory. Reference to No. 36	44
44	Mr. Wyndham ..	348	Oct. 15,	Caravan plundered by Persian Kurds, who escaped through inaction of Turkish officer. Has brought to notice of Porte	45
				Fire at Zeitoun	46
45	" " ..	350	16,	Junction of the Kerassond-Karahissar road. Settlement of question of	47
46	" " ..	351	17,	Fire at Zeitoun. Approves steps described ..	49
47	To Mr. Wyndham ..	308	30,	Approves action reported in No. 44 ..	49
48	" " ..	309	30,	Approve Consul at Trebizond for action reported in No. 46	50
49	" " ..	311	31,	Junction of Kerassond and Karahissar road. Minister for Public Works confirms No. 46	50
50	Mr. Wyndham ..	358	21,	Protest of Porte against debates in Parliament on Turkish affairs	50
51	Assim Pasha to Musurus Pasha	Telegraphic	Nov. 16,	Protestants at Aintab arrested. Is protesting unofficially	50
52	Mr. Wyndham ..	388	12,	Deplorable condition of Trebizond	51
53	" " ..	435	29,	Inclosing Memorandum to Porte. Reference to No. 52. To continue to press Porte to	
54	To Mr. Wyndham ..	353	Dec. 4,	release Protestants	53
55	Mr. Wyndham ..	44	2,	Kerassond-Karahissar road. Trebizond section completed	53
56	" " ..	460	11,	Condition of Vilayet of Trebizond. Will await result of Aziz Pasha's appointment before fresh representations to Porte ..	54
57	" " ..	480 Confidential	19,	Destruction of property of Dragoman of Aleppo Consulate, probably at instigation of Vali. Correspondence respecting	56
58	" " ..	481 Confidential	19,	Maladministration of Aleppo. Representations to Porte	64
59	Assim Pasha to Musurus Pasha	..	18,	Alleged arrest of fifteen Protestant converts at Constantinople. Inquiry instituted ..	65
60	To Mr. Wyndham ..	386	29,	State of Trebizond. Approves course suggested in No. 56	65

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Further Correspondence respecting Administrative Reforms in the Asiatic Provinces of Turkey.

Part VIII.

No. 1.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received January* 9, 1884.)

(No. 689.) *Constantinople, December* 19, 1883.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Consul Biliotti upon the subject of brigandage in the Vilayet of Trebizond, and to state that I have authorized him, if it should appear advisable, to compliment Sirri Pasha upon the energy which he is showing in dealing with this evil in the district under his orders.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 68.) *Trebizond, December* 10, 1883.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 56 of the 31st October last, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that four weeks ago the Laz chief brigand, Yanik Ahmed, of whom I spoke in my despatch No. 46 of the 26th September last, as well as one of his followers named Bilal, were killed in an encounter with the police at Fatza, and that Arif, another of the band, was captured on the same occasion.

Yesterday Sirri Pasha communicated to me the news that the notorious Kodjoglou, hotly pursued in the Vilayet of Trebizond, had crossed into that of Sivas, and had been killed the day before by the police near Niksar.

Traces of blood in the direction taken by his followers induce to believe that one or more of them have been wounded in the fight.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 2.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received January* 9, 1884.)

(No. 690.) *Constantinople, December* 21, 1883.

My Lord,

IN your Lordship's despatch No. 251 of the 5th July, you requested me to arrange if possible for the suppression of Djemil Pasha, the Vali of Aleppo, in consequence of his gross misconduct, as reported in various despatches from Consul Henderson.

Considering that his Excellency's interference with the due course of justice in Dr. Martin's case afforded a favourable opportunity for convincing the Porte of this

official's unfitness for his present post, I have addressed the accompanying note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Unfortunately, as I have already informed your Lordship, Djemil Pasha is a son of one of the Sultan's chief favourites, and he has just received a further mark of His Majesty's good-will by being raised to the rank of Moushir. He is, I understand, no favourite at the Porte, and the Sultan's Ministers would be glad enough to get rid of him if they had any voice in the matter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 2.

The Earl of Dufferin to Aarifi Pasha.

Constantinople, le 20 Décembre, 1883.

IL ressort des renseignements parvenus à l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté Britannique que la conduite de son Excellence Djemil Pacha dans le procès du Dr. Martin, d'Antioche, a été des plus répréhensibles.

Les procédés qu'on lui reproche sont les suivants:—

1. Qu'il a mis en liberté deux des prisonniers Grecs avant même que l'affaire eut été portée par devant le Tribunal Criminel d'Alep.

2. Qu'il a exercé une pression injustifiable sur un des fonctionnaires judiciaires d'Alep avec menace de le faire destituer pour avoir épousé la cause du Dr. Martin.

3. Que Rifat Aga, l'agent de Djemil Pacha, a beaucoup encouragé les Grecs d'Antioche, dont l'attitude arrogante devient de plus en plus intolérable, au point même d'inspirer les plus vives inquiétudes au Dr. Martin et à sa famille, pour la sécurité desquelles le Gouvernement Impérial sera tenu responsable.

En signalant ce qui précède à l'attention de la Sublime Porte il importe d'ajouter que l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté Britannique verrait avec la plus grande satisfaction l'éloignement des causes qui paralysent ainsi le cours de la justice et la liberté d'action des Tribunaux d'Alep.

(Signé) DUFFERIN.

No. 3.

Consul Dennis to Earl Granville.—(Received January 9, 1884.)

(No. 52.) *Smyrna, December 28, 1883.*

My Lord,

BRIGANDAGE is unhappily so prevalent in this part of Asia Minor as almost to deserve to be classed among the institutions of the country. I have, therefore, not thought it necessary to bring to your Lordship's notice every outrage of this description that has come to my knowledge, reporting such cases only occasionally or incidentally. I have now, however, the honour to report a most extraordinary and tragical occurrence that took place yesterday evening at Smyrna—nothing less than a furious combat between a band of brigands and the Turkish soldiery within the walls of the Governor-General's Palace!

In August last two large bands of brigands made their submission to the authorities, and were pardoned by the Sultan. One band was commanded by Kujuk Jeritoglu, who, in May last, achieved the unprecedented feat of capturing, at one haul, twenty-five persons who had just landed from an English coasting steamer at the little port of Kuluk, in the Gulf of Manlujah, mention of which was made in my despatches No. 24 of the 25th May last and No. 4, Commercial, of the 1st June last. The other band was that of Yuruk Osman, who is said to have taken part in the same act of brigandage. Both bands were composed entirely of Zeybeks, the brave but lawless highlanders, who inhabit the mountain ranges which bound the valleys of the Cayster and Meander, which district they had long ravaged almost with impunity. But owing to the energetic and skilful measures adopted by Hadji Nachid Pasha, our present Governor-General, these bands were so hard pressed that they were induced to pray for pardon, and they obtained it as usual. When a branch of the Ottoman Railway was opened to Thyra in August last, the Vali took me to see these two Chiefs with their bands, who had just received their pardon in that town. Since then Yuruk Osman and his band have been employed as rural police to capture other brigands in the district they had previously ravaged, and in truth they did some good

service at first in that capacity, but latterly Yuruk Osman has been levying black mail on the landed proprietors, and exacting provisions and money also from the peasantry. The Vali sent spies to verify the complaints which had reached him, and received such satisfactory proofs of the misdeeds of these ex-brigands, that he determined to suppress them. But it was no easy matter to get them into his power, for he was well aware that if he gave them the least suspicion of hostile intentions on his part they would immediately escape to the mountains, and resume their old vocation. He, therefore, invited them to come to Smyrna under the pretext of giving them fresh directions, and of rewarding them for their past services. At first they seemed unwilling to accept the invitation, but were ultimately persuaded by the Kaïmakam of Thyra to accompany him to Smyrna, where they arrived yesterday evening, fifteen in all, headed by Yuruk Osman, and including Kurd Omer, another *capobanda*, who wished to obtain pardon from the Government.

On reaching Smyrna they went from the railway station to a khan, where they left their Martini rifles—a fortunate circumstance, as it proved,—and proceeded in a body to the konak between 7 and 8 in the evening. The Vali received them in a friendly manner, gave them coffee and cigars as usual, and after some conversation proposed that they should retire and take their supper. On leaving the audience chamber they were accosted by Osman Pasha, the second in command of the troops, who invited them to lay down their arms, and to accompany him to the barracks. This at once roused their suspicions; they indignantly refused to comply; and, perceiving that zaptiehs or gendarmes were drawn up on the landing-place, and soldiers in the hall below, Yuruk Osman drew his revolver, and shouting, "My men, we are entrapped!" descended deliberately to the hall, where, firing his first shot to the ground, to give warning to his adversaries, according to Turkish custom, he fired his second at Osman Pasha, and wounded a soldier in the neck. The military returned the fire, and other soldiers, who had been concealed on the ground-floor, now rushed out, and a fierce combat ensued; the brigands, armed only with revolvers and long knives or yataghans, making a stand for half-an-hour against the rifles of the soldiers. It seems to have been the intention of Yuruk Osman at first to cut a passage through his foes, but on receiving two bullets in his body he rushed up the staircase, with the view, it appeared, of taking vengeance on the Vali for his treachery; but before he could reach the landing-place he received his *coup de grâce* from the revolver of an aide-de-camp. Before he fell, however, he shot a zaptieh who stood at the head of the double staircase. By this time five of the brigands were killed and two wounded; and the remaining eight, after a vain attempt to escape through the windows of the guard-room, half-way up the staircase, were captured, pinioned, and thrown into prison. But before this result was achieved one of the band rushed into the audience chamber, with the intention of sacrificing the Vali to his vengeance; but his Excellency had left the room. At that moment Kadri Bey, the Defterdar or Comptroller, next in authority to the Vali, entered the chamber by another door, when the brigand rushed at him, yataghan in hand, and would have cut him down, but he was suddenly pinioned by one of the aides-de-camp, a man of great muscular power, who wrested the weapon from his hand, and with it actually severed his head from his body. Some state that he was dispatched by repeated blows of a sabre, others that he was shot; but I give the account I received from the Vali himself and from his secretary.

Two companies of soldiers and many zaptiehs took part in the fray, and it is surprising that against such a force the brigands were able to maintain their ground so long, and that they escaped annihilation. Rumour asserts that more of the military fell than of the brigands, but the official statement limits the loss of the force to two killed and three wounded.

This morning I visited the konak to congratulate the Vali and the Defterdar on their fortunate escape. The marble stairs and the floor of the entrance hall where the combat had taken place had already been purified from all traces of the sanguinary fray, but the walls, the balustrades, the doors and windows bore abundant evidences of it, in numerous bullet-marks of which I counted about forty, though I was assured by the head of the zaptiehs that altogether not less than 250 shots had been fired, a statement which appeared to me exaggerated. In the audience chamber I observed traces of the beheading in one corner, where the wall was spattered and smeared with blood, and where a large circle on the Turkey carpet was dyed of a deeper red.

While I was with the Vali he received a telegram from Oedemish, in the district of Thyra, reporting that a notorious old brigand chief, Chakirdjee, who had long ravaged that neighbourhood, had just been killed, together with one of his men, by the troops sent against him. The Vali assured me that he had no intention of destroying

Yuruk Osman and his band when he invited them to Smyrna: that his object in getting these brigands into his power was to confine them in the barracks until he received instructions from the Porte respecting them; but that knowing he had to deal with bold and desperate men, he had taken the precaution of keeping a strong military force at hand, expecting the brigands to yield when they saw that resistance would be **in vain.**

The Vali's eyes appear now to be opened to the impolicy of granting pardon to brigands whenever they may find it convenient to ask it; and he tells me he has telegraphed to Constantinople praying that His Imperial Majesty the Sultan will not exercise his wonted clemency in this instance, but will permit him to subject these wretches at once to the capital punishment they deserve. I congratulated him on his conversion to my opinion, not for the first time expressed to him, that the system of giving pardon to bandits, almost invariably granted when solicited, was a most mistaken policy, calculated to encourage brigandage rather than to suppress it, as it operated as a premium on crime; for it was obvious that if a brigand on finding himself hard pressed by the troops, or by the severity of the weather, can escape punishment for his misdeeds by submission, he will not be deterred by fear of the authorities from resuming his course of rapine and murder whenever circumstances prove more favourable to him. As brigands are not mere robbers, but assassins by profession, invariably mutilating and eventually murdering their victims when they fail to pay the ransom demanded, I maintained that if taken in arms against the Government they ought to receive no quarter, but to be treated like pirates, or like wolves and other wild beasts which prey on mankind, or, if to grant to the troops the power of dispatching them on the spot might lead to abuses, they ought to be promptly tried by court-martial, and summarily and publicly executed. I further pointed out that such condign punishment would destroy the illusion with which brigands are now invested in the eyes of the peasantry and lower orders—an illusion encouraged by the authorities of the towns where they make their submission, who are wont to march out to welcome them with bands playing and banners flying, thus causing the ignorant peasantry to regard them as heroes, and casting such a false glamour over the life of a brigand as to furnish ready recruits for the next band that may be formed in the neighbourhood. I expressed my conviction that by taking from brigands all hope of pardon for their crimes, and by the public execution of those who might fall into his power, the Vali would do more to suppress brigandage in this vilayet than by the efforts of any number of troops he might dispatch against them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEO. DENNIS.

No. 4.

Earl Granville to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 21.) *Foreign Office, January* 15, 1884.

My Lord,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 690 of the 21st ultimo, transmitting copy of a note which you have addressed to the Sublime Porte, representing the misconduct of Djemil Pasha, Vali of Aleppo, in regard to the trial of the prisoners arrested for the assault on Dr. Martin at Antioch.

The terms of your Excellency's note are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 5.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received January* 16, 1884.)

(No. 704.) *Constantinople, December* 31, 1883.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copies of three despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond respecting the difficulties encountered by the Vali of that vilayet in his attempts to put a stop to the numerous depredations and murders committed by Laz brigands.

From Mr. Biliotti's observations it would seem that Sirri Pasha, notwithstanding the

inefficient means at his disposal, has made the most praiseworthy efforts in the above direction, but that his action has been paralyzed by the protection given to the Laz brigands by their more influential countrymen, and above all by the want of adequate assistance afforded to him by the Central Government.

I have therefore considered it my duty to make a representation on the subject to the Sublime Porte, pointing out the difficulties with which his Excellency has to contend, and the desirability of giving him every encouragement and support.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 5.

Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Dufferin.

(Confidential.)

My Lord, *Trebizond, December* 19, 1883.

I HAVE just had the visit of the Vicar of the Bishop of Niksar, the same who was robbed last year of 180*l.* (not 120*l.* as mentioned in Confidential despatch of the 10th instant), by the band of Yanik Ahmed.

He related to me that he was despoiled at an hour and a-half from Niksar, and not knowing who the brigands were, though he had recognized them to be Lazes, he sent men after them in their retreat in order to find out where they resided.

His emissaries followed the band to Vona, and saw them go, with the spoils, straight into the house of Tchuruksooli Ali Pasha.

As he could not apply to Ali Pasha himself for the restitution of the stolen property, he addressed a letter to Kodjoglou, who answered that the band belonged to Yanik Ahmed with the exception of one of his own men, who had happened to be a "mussafir" (a guest) with them, and had taken part in the expedition as an amateur.

Kodjoglou added that his man had received for his share 31 silver medjidiés, and a silver watch, which were at his disposal, but which were never returned.

The Vicar consequently applied to Yanik Ahmed, who, while at Vona, and in daily intercourse with the relatives of Ali Pasha, if not with himself, promised not only the restitution of the stolen property, but also the payment of an additional 100*l.*, if he could induce the authorities to cease pursuits against him.

The Vicar declined the surplus, but before negotiations were at an end, Yanik was killed by the police.

I have the honour to further inform your Lordship that during my last trip at Samsoon, M. Giudici, the Russian Consul there, who was for many years in the same capacity at Batoum, told me that some twenty years back he had caused the same Tchuruksooli Ali Pasha, and his brother Osman Pasha, to be apprehended and brought down in chains, by the Turkish authorities, for the plunder and murder of a Russian Jew, near Bayboort.

It was confirmed to me, on my return here, by trustworthy parties, that these two Pashas had been kept in prison at Trebizond for the said crime.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 5.

Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 69.) *Trebizond, December* 22, 1883.

My Lord,

I HAVE had the honour, on the 20th August last, to inform your Lordship that, in the hope to restore tranquillity, Sirri Pasha had some time previously appointed Tchuruksooli Osman Pasha to be Sirdar in the western districts of this vilayet inhabited by Lazes.

Tchuruksooli Ali Pasha was also begged to assist his brother in the police functions intrusted to him, and at their request a Laz Bimbachi of Gendarmerie was adjointed to them.

But the experiment to intrust their Chiefs with the police of the locality was not, with the Lazes, as successful as it had proved to be with the Circassians.

On the contrary, nefarious acts increased to an alarming extent in this vilayet, and extended in the neighbouring one of Sivas.

Within the last three years the number of murders committed by Laz brigands amounts to nearly 100.

Seven murders having been perpetrated within the three weeks that Sirri Pasha spent at Unieh, he saw the necessity to adopt a new plan.

He appointed to the command of the police force at Ordoo, Unieh, and Fatza, a Circassian Yuzbachi, Khosroff Bey, who had distinguished himself in destroying a gang of brigands headed by one of his countrymen at Samsoon, while the authorities at Sivas sent on their side all their available police force to act jointly.

Khosroff Bey gave incessant chase to Laz brigands in this vilayet; he was shot through the body in an encounter in which he killed one of Kodjoglou's brothers, and remained two months between life and death.

To his daring and exertions is mostly due the destruction of the bands of Yanik Ahmed and of Kodjoglou.

It was expected that the Uzbachi in question would have been rewarded for his meritorious conduct, but it is rumoured instead that it is the intention of the Porte to send him to Rizeh without any recognition for his services; this would amount to an honourable exile.

This measure, if carried out, besides being an act of injustice towards an officer who has fulfilled his duties to the risk of his life, would annihilate the confidence of being protected in their property and lives, which was reviving in the populations, and would be a kind of encouragement to Laz brigands.

It is to be hoped that the rumour is premature, but as it has already happened that deserving officers, instead of being rewarded, were punished for arresting brigands in this vilayet (reference to Inclosure 2 in my No. 64 of the 22nd ultimo) I consider myself in duty bound to call your Lordship's attention to the current noise, which after all may not be without foundation.

In fact, Tchuruksooli Ali Pasha complained at Trebizond as well as at Constantinople that the police had brutally treated innocent Lazes, and that Bulgarian atrocities were nothing as compared to those perpetrated on his countrymen.

Sirri Pasha, in answer to Ali Pasha's communication, informed him that no cases of this description were brought to his notice; that he did not say they were impossible, and advised that should any Lazes have to complain of ill-usage on the part of the police, to lodge complaints against the officers or men who had thus misbehaved.

He added that as the cases were to be tried by an independent Court, the plaintiffs were certain to obtain justice; but hitherto no charges were made.

In the meantime Sirri Pasha ordered the Mutessarif of Samsoon, and the Public Prosecutor at Trebizond, to make inquiries, and bring to justice the guilty parties, should there be any.

I can bear testimony that three years since, on my return from a trip to Tireboli, having submitted to Sirri Pasha, who at that time was also Vali here, similar cases (with names, dates, and details), practised on natives in that caza, the guilty zaptiehs were brought to justice and dismissed from the service, after having been severely punished.

However, owing to the influence at Constantinople of Tchuruksooli Ali Pasha, and of his friends, another view may have been taken by the Porte in the present instance. This would be highly regrettable, for it could not be expected that in future Turkish police officers would expose their lives with the prospect to run the additional risk attached to the performance of their duties; and the only possible consequence would be unbounded brigandage in a vilayet already so much distressed by that evil.

Furthermore, the prestige of the Vali of Trebizond, which begins to revive, would again be reduced to nothing, to the great detriment not only of the populations, but of the Government themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 3 in No. 5.

Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Dufferin.

(Confidential.)
My Lord, *Trebizond, December* 22, 1883.

SIRRI Pasha has confidentially communicated to me a private letter addressed to him by Hassan Fehmi Effendi, Minister of Public Works, on behalf of the Lazes in the Sandjak of Djanik, that is at Ordoo, Fatza, and Unieh.

Hassan Fehmi Effendi, who, as I have stated in a previous despatch, is himself a Laz, honestly believing his countrymen to be too severely treated, bitterly complains that for five or ten bad characters, twenty, thirty, forty, or even more innocent emigrants should be made to suffer, that this is contrary to established regularities, to the benevolent intentions of the Sultan, &c.

Sirri Pasha was indignant at this letter, which in fact is nothing but an undeserved reproach for putting down Laz brigandage.

He observed to me that except for a telegram from Tchuruksooli Ali Pasha, who cites no other case but that of Hassan Aga (reference to my Confidential despatch of the 10th instant), he had no proof that innocent Lazes had been ill-treated, and that if this were the case, they should lodge complaints before the competent Courts of Justice.

He further observed to me that putting things at the worst, the ill-treatments to which doubtful innocent Lazes may have been subjected, if they be true, cannot exceed a few blows, or a detention of a few days, and that these irregularities cannot be compared to the plunder, wounding, and murder of really innocent men, women, and children, without reckoning zaptiehs.

However, hitherto no charges were made, but vague complaints were sent to Constantinople against Sirri Pasha, with the above-mentioned result, which may not be limited to the private letter of Hassan Fehmi Effendi.

Under these circumstances, it may be asked what is a Vali to do, when the province he governs is infested with brigands? He cannot, however, allow the populations to be butchered without interfering, and after all the trouble which Sirri Pasha has taken to put down brigandage with an inefficient police force, it is hard that instead of being thanked, he should be written as he has been by a Minister of State.

I may add that as Tchuruksooli Ali Pasha, the highest among the emigrants at Djanik, seems to be himself compromised in their depredations, and that as Lazes in general have on more than one occasion prevented the capture, or concealed notorious brigands when they were chased by the police, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to draw a line of demarcation between culprit and innocent emigrants.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 6.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received January 16.)

(No. 3.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 7, 1884.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Colonel Everett, containing a report from Mr. Boyajian of a recent act of lawlessness committed by Kurds at Argani Maden.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 6.

Lieutenant-Colonel Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 62.)
My Lord, *Erzeroum, December* 19, 1883.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a despatch from Mr. Boyajian furnishing another illustration of Kurdish lawlessness.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. EVERETT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 6.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Lieutenant-Colonel Everett.

(No 11.)
Sir, *Diarbekir, December* 5, 1883.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that some 300 armed Kurds from the region of Egil marched on the night of the 29th ultimo to Argani Maden (the head-quarters

of the Sandjak of Maden), forced open the gates of the prison, and set free about thirty malefactors. In the mêlée which ensued between the prison guards and the Kurds several of the former were wounded. The authorities here are not as yet in possession of the details of the affair.

On being informed of this sad event the Governor-General dispatched some troops and mounted gendarmes to apprehend and punish the Kurds for their daring act, and to rearrest the criminals thus liberated.

I need not state that it will be no easy task to rearrest those who very likely are now scattered among the mountain fastnesses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. BOYAJIAN.

No. 7.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received January 30.)

(No. 17.)
Constantinople, January 16, 1884.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 609 of the 10th November last I had the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Mr. Eyres respecting the case of Ohannes Vartabed, and to inform your Lordship that I had called the serious attention of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the matter.

I subsequently made similar representations to the Minister of Justice, and communicated to his Excellency the substance of Mr. Eyres' despatch.

In reply, Edhem Pasha promised me that he would do all in his power to cause the Cour de Cassation to hasten its decision respecting the third trial, and stated that he would also send orders to the local authorities of Van for the better treatment of the prisoners.

As regards Mr. Eyres' statements, however, his Excellency made the following observations:—

1. That Mr. Eyres must have been misinformed as to the Vali having secretly kept back for eleven months the decision of the Cour de Cassation at Constantinople, ordering a new trial, as all such decisions are, according to established rule, forwarded to the Procureur-Général and not to the Vali.

2. That the same Tribunal has the right to try a case twice over, unless the accused should claim the right to be tried by a different Tribunal on the grounds specified by the law.

3. That it was not clear, in the present instance, whether this right had been claimed by Ohannes Vartabed or not.

I lost no time in communicating the above to Mr. Eyres, and I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a despatch from that gentleman, containing his replies to Edhem Pasha's observations.

As your Lordship will perceive, Mr. Eyres announces, in the concluding paragraph of his despatch, that Ohannes Vartabed was released from prison on the 5th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 7.

Mr. Eyres to Lieutenant-Colonel Everett.

(No. 27.)
Van, December 11, 1883.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of a despatch addressed to you by Her Majesty's Ambassador, and dated the 15th November, with regard to the trial and imprisonment of Ohannes Vartabed, and I venture to make the following answers to the observations of the Minister of Justice:—

1. The decision of the Cour de Cassation was undoubtedly sent in due course to the Procureur-Général, but it was by the Vali's verbal orders that the Procureur-Général kept it back. Theoretically the Courts of Justice, as at present constituted, are independent of the executive authorities, but in practice none of the officials of justice dare move a finger without the Vali's permission. It is an unquestionable fact that the Vali did give orders that the decision should not be made public, as the

Procureur-Général himself informed the advocate of Ohannes Vartabed that such was the case, and further, the date of the document is a proof that it was received here eleven months before it was produced, an irregularity of which the Procureur-Général would not have dared to be guilty on his own responsibility. Proof is of course impossible, as the Vali's orders were verbal, and for his own sake the Procureur-Général would deny it, while he would easily find some excuse for its prolonged retention.

2. Ohannes Vartabed was first tried before the Court of First Instance at Bashkaleh. That Court not being competent to give a final sentence in a criminal case without reference to the "Héiét Ittihamié," consisting in the present case of the Procureur-Général, the President of the Criminal Court of First Instance, and two members of that Court, the sentence was referred to Van for confirmation (I may observe that though Hekkiari is a vilayet, in all judicial matters it is still considered as a dependency of Van). The "Héiét Ittihamié" confirmed the sentence, and according to the legal course, forwarded the sentence thus confirmed to the Court of Appeal. Up to this point the procedure is only equivalent to a true bill being found by a Grand Jury, and consequently Ohannes Vartabed was sent for to Van in order to undergo his trial before the Court of Appeal. Then Major Clayton intervened, and the confirmation of the sentence by the "Héiét Ittihamié" was declared to be vitiated by the fact that one of the members had not signed, and the whole question was referred to the Cour de Cassation.

When the order of the Superior Court was received in Van, to the effect that a new trial was to be held, the Procureur-Général ought to have ordered the case to be tried before the Court of Appeal in Van, as the matter had already been referred to that Court. But after the interval of eleven months (previously mentioned) had elapsed, he sent the papers to the Criminal Court of First Instance, an act for which I understand he might have been held legally responsible, and punished, if the Vartabed had protested against it. But having no legal adviser, and not being acquainted with the law, he let his opportunity slip. An advocate was then granted to him, who made objections to two members of the Court, Sheikh Hassan and Sherif Bey, to the latter on the ground that he is known to be a mortal enemy of the Vartabed, who had opposed him on many occasions, and notably when the Bey unlawfully seized a large territory belonging to the Armenian community of Bashkaleh, and to the former because he was a near relation of the deceased and of his representative in the trial. After the second trial the Vartabed's lawyer protested against the President, Hadji Mustapha Effendi, on account of his evident bias against the prisoner, which was evinced by the fact that he obtained the dismissal of one Mustantik (Juge d'Instruction), who declared the Vartabed innocent, and succeeded in intimidating his successor into finding a true bill.

No notice was taken of the objections made to the two members previous to the second trial, but the "Cour de Cassation" still has to give its judgment concerning the protest made against the President.

3. Ohannes Vartabed's advocate finally telegraphed to His Majesty the Sultan, the Armenian Patriarch, and the Minister of Justice, requesting that the new trial should be held before a different Court.

I may add that the Inspector of Justice sent a Report to the Court at Bashkaleh, declaring that Ohannes Vartabed was innocent and ought to be acquitted.

I have also the honour to inform you that Ohannes Vartabed was released from prison on the 5th instant, to the great satisfaction of all the Armenians of this place, who have requested me to express their heartfelt gratitude to Her Majesty's Ambassador for his kind interference on their behalf.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. C. EYRES.

No. 8.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received January 30.)

(No. 18. Confidential.)
Constantinople, January 16, 1884.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to trasmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, giving the substance

of a Report which Sirri Pasha has recently addressed to the Sublime Porte on the subject of brigandage in the Laz districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Dufferin.

(Confidential.) *Trebizond, December* 29, 1883.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that when I called on Sirri Pasha to compliment him on your part, he was finishing a long Report on the subject of brigandage which he confidentially communicated to me.

It would seem that Hadji Abeddin, of Iskessoor, whose son was murdered by Kodjoglou, as reported in my despatch No. 46 of the 28th September last, finding that the Porte did not pay due attention to his Petitions on the subject, threatened to refer the case to the Embassies.

In consequence thereof, the Porte made inquiries from Sirri Pasha, who availed himself of the opportunity to draw up the forementioned Report in which he enters into full details.

It is remarkable that hitherto no attention was paid at Constantinople to the reiterated clamours of the population at large, nor to the numerous Reports of the Vali on the subject of brigandage, and that a single individual threatening to apply to foreign authorities should have roused the Porte from its slumber.

Sirri Pasha states, in his Report, that he is perfectly aware that his sincerity will turn against him, but that he is not deterred by that consideration from speaking the truth.

He refers to his previous Reports, recapitulating all the rumours in circulation against Tchurooksooli Ali Pasha, and pointing out the undeniable fact that he is doing his best for shielding Laz brigands. Sirri Pasha expresses the opinion that if Ali Pasha is not in league with them, the most lenient construction to be put on his proceedings is that he aims thereby to enjoy great influence among his countrymen, but that the property and lives of the native populations are sacrificed in attaining this end.

The Vali also points out that the working of the Criminal Courts is so defective that, provided he can pay, the greatest criminal is sure, in some way or other, to recover his liberty, and that this fact, being of public notoriety, there is no restraint on brigandage.

Sirri Pasha further states that he has, for the present, succeeded to destroy the most dangerous bands of brigands, but that so long as the two forementioned causes exist, it cannot be expected that brigandage will be extirpated in this vilayet; new bands will spring up, and the work he has done shall have to be done over again without any hope of its ever being completed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 9.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received February* 13.)

(No. 37.) *Constantinople, February* 4, 1884.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 12 of the 16th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which has been addressed by Mr. Vice-Consul Eyres of Van to Lieutenant-Colonel Everett, on the subject of Russian military activity in the Caucasus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Mr. Eyres to Lieutenant-Colonel Everett.

(No. 30.) *Van, December* 30, 1883.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 28 of the 18th instant I have the honour to inform you that I have made inquiries with regard to the presence of Russian troops in Igdyr, and I find it is true that some battalions were in Igdyr for a short period, but have since been removed. I believe their passage was due to the ordinary transfer of troops.

Still there is unquestionably considerable military activity on the other side of the frontier. Stores are being collected and horses and carts. Several mule-drivers who came lately from Erivan have told me that they were ordered by the Governor of that city to return quickly, as they would be required to aid in the transport of stores.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 10.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received February* 26.)

(No. 10.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, February* 25, 1884, 11·15 P.M.

THE Vali of Van has been dismissed.

No. 11.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received February* 27.)

(No. 50.) *Constantinople, February* 18, 1884.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 704 of the 31st December last, I have the honour to inclose a Memorandum containing the substance of the Vali of Trebizond's Report on the subject of the outrages committed by brigands in Hodourtchour.

This Report was called for by the Sublime Porte in consequence of the communication to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the contents of Mr. Consul Biliotti's despatches on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 11.

Substance of Report by the Vali of Trebizond on Brigandage.

A LA date du 15 Décembre écoulé l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté Britannique avait communiqué à la Porte le résumé de la dépêche de M. le Consul Biliotti, qui exposait les plaintes des habitants de Hodourtchour.

Cette communication ayant été transmise au Vali de Trébizonde, son Excellence Sirri Pasha vient de répondre au Ministère des Affaires Étrangères disant que le village de Hodourtchour, théâtre des exploits des Telli-oglou, se trouve dans le Vilayet d'Erzeroum, que les autorités du Vilayet de Trébizonde, préoccupées des méfaits de ces brigands, avaient opéré des recherches pour les découvrir et les arrêter, mais qu'elles n'y avaient pas réussi, que ces individus étant originaires du Lazistan, les autorité des cette province avaient reçu des ordres sévères pour les poursuivre et détruire leurs bandes, et que grâce aux mesures prises par ces dernières, Aslan, Chaaban, Salih, Bairaktar, Ellias, Ibrahim, et Halil ont été pris vivants après un combat; que les chefs et associés présumés de ces brigands, les nommés Ahmed Buyuk Salik Bairaktar et Mimich, ayant été poursuivis et traqués, se sont mis dans la nécessité de se livrer eux-mêmes à

l'autorité de Riyeh, et que tous ont été déférés aux Tribunaux, qui les jugeront, et subiront ainsi la punition qu'ils méritent.

Le 14 Février, 1884.

No. 12.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received March* 12.)

(No. 67.) *Constantinople, February* 25, 1884.

My Lord,

I AM happy to be able to inform your Lordship that the Vali of Van, for whose dismissal I have been pressing for some time past, and whose misconduct is fully set forth in recent reports of Colonel Everett, has been superseded.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN

No. 13.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received March* 12.)

(No. 77.) *Constantinople, March* 4, 1884.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Eyres, stating that Hassan Pasha, the Vali of Van, is to be superseded in March, and that he will probably be succeeded by Rustem Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 13.

Mr. Eyres to Lieutenant-Colonel Everett.

(No. 4.) *Van, February* 5, 1884.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Governor-General, Hassan Pasha, told me yesterday that he is to be superseded in March. His Excellency mentioned Rustem Pasha as his probable successor.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 14.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received March* 12.)

(No. 85.) *Constantinople, March* 8, 1884.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour of sending to you herewith a very able and interesting Report by Colonel Everett on the condition of the Vilayet of Erzeroum, as well as four other Reports from Mr. Vice-Consul Eyres on the Vilayets of Van, Hekkiari, and Bitlis.

Your Lordship will observe with regret that these documents repeat the same tale of wrong, misery, corrupt and incapable administration, as those with which Her Majesty's Government has already been repeatedly furnished.

Although I have not thought it necessary constantly to trouble your Lordship on the same subject, I have never neglected a favourable opportunity of impressing the Porte with the disastrous consequences which must ensue unless some means be found of ameliorating the condition of Kurdistan and Eastern Anatolia. On a late occasion I denounced in very strong terms to the Grand Vizier the conduct of the corrupt officials who are occupied in aggravating the wretchedness of the unhappy populations intrusted to their care, and on his Highness expressing some surprise at the energy of my language, I told him that it was my intention to send him copies in Turkish of the

Reports of our Consular authorities, in the hopes that when he read an account of the existing state of things in his own language it might make more impression upon his mind than if brought to his notice in a tongue with which he was but imperfectly acquainted. I have consequently had these Reports translated, with the exception of a few passages, and I have transmitted them to the Grand Vizier, with an earnest request that he would examine them with the attention they merit.

Your Lordship will observe that I have subjoined another document to the Reports received from Colonel Everett. This paper, which has been furnished me by Mr. Boyadjian, the British Acting Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, and contains the statistics of crime within a single caza during eight months, is a striking illustration of the truth of the statements made by Colonel Everett and Mr. Eyres.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 14.

Some Remarks by Lieutenant-Colonel Everett on the Organization, Government, and General Condition of the Vilayets composing the Kurdistan Consulate.

THE jurisdiction of this Consulate extends at the present time over the seven vilayets of Erzeroum, Dersym, Kharput, Diarbekir, Hekkiari, Van, and Bitlis.

Erzeroum.

Erzeroum is now by far the largest of these vilayets, and is divided into the four Sandjaks of Erzeroum, Erzingan, Baiburt, and Bayazid. The city of Erzeroum is at present the seat of government, but it is doubtful whether it will long remain so. Since the late war an opinion has gradually gained ground that its position is unsuitable as a centre by reason of its proximity to the frontier. The objection is doubtless well founded, but it is not so easy to make the desired change. For many centuries Erzeroum has been a city of importance, and although it has not swollen much beyond its original limits, the population is considerable. Its magnificent position, though somewhat impaired by recent events, is still unequalled; its climate is healthier than that of any city in this part of Asia; considerable sums of money have from time to time been spent on the erection of buildings suitable for Government offices; and, lastly, it is situated on the great high road from Trebizond to Persia, and it possesses direct communication during the summer with the south.

These weighty considerations render its abandonment by the Government a matter of difficulty, irrespective of local traditions, which, with so conservative a nation, must always be taken into account; while the expenditure following on the change is such as to call for deep reflection before so radical a measure be adopted.

In the event of such a contingency, the choice of a capital appears to be divided between Erzingan and Baiburt. Of the two, the rising town of Erzingan, already the head-quarters of the 4th Army Corps, is geographically the better situated, and is, from its direction, the natural position to fall back on. Its chief defects are a want of proper communications in almost every direction, and great unhealthiness, arising principally from absence of drainage. But for these drawbacks it is possible that Erzingan might in time not only equal but exceed in importance the old capital. It is the considerable expenditure which would attend the necessary improvements that has probably suggested Baiburt as a possible rival, a small town, and healthy enough, but with little to recommend it beyond its situation, like Erzeroum, on the only made road in this portion of the Empire. There is no certainty as to what shape these ideas have as yet taken, nor, indeed, as to whether they have taken any shape at all. From time to time the rumour spreads itself that a change is about to be made, and then dies out again; nevertheless, the question is assuredly occupying the attention of the Government.

With one notable exception there has been but little change in the executive staff of the vilayet since the last Report (made in February 1882). The Mutessarif of Bayazid has, at the instance of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, been dismissed from his post, and a successor, Kyassim Bey, an Albanian, appointed in his place. Any man would have been popular, to a certain extent, after so bad an administrator as Ibrahim Effendi; but according to the accounts which have been received from that district, Kyassim Bey appears to be an exceptionally just and able man, who has succeeded

during his six months' sojourn at Bayazid in gaining the good-will of all peace-loving inhabitants. Beyond showing his good intentions, giving good advice, and setting an example of probity, he can, however, do but little. Obligatorily subservient to that strict doctrine of centralization which is interwoven with the string of Turkish officialism throughout its entire length, meeting with no support from his superior, unprovided with an efficient executive staff, and surrounded by a set of officials and Kurdish Chieftains who, under his predecessor, were accustomed, and indeed encouraged, to commit every kind of atrocity, his helplessness is but too apparent, and the chances are that he will either voluntarily resign his appointment or be driven to do so.

Hadji Hussein Pasha having been dismissed from Erzingan, probably on account of his age and infirmities, the Lieutenant-Governorship of that sandjak remains for the moment vacant. Yusuf Pasha still governs in Baiburt.

In the eastern portion of this district there has been this year the usual trouble between the Lazistan brigands and the Catholic Christians residing at Khodoortchor, in the sub-district of Ispir. Every year, as far back as the oldest inhabitants can well remember, the people of Khodoortchor have been attacked, plundered, or burnt out by the partisans of a certain powerful robber Chieftain residing at Hemshin, in the adjacent Sandjak of Riza. Year after year they call the attention of the authorities to their condition, but without much success. Now and again, when a more outrageous attack than usual has been made, and when driven to desperation, the Consuls of foreign countries have been appealed to, some show of activity is made by the local authorities, and the Chieftain or one of the family is, as at the present moment, apprehended; but the state of things is not a whit improved. It must be allowed that there are difficulties in the case. The robbers reside in Lazistan, where the authority of the Government is so little respected as to be barely more than nominal, and where there is every reason to suppose the robbers are more feared by the authorities than the authorities by the robbers. Thus their capture on the Lazistan side is no easy matter, while, unless a sufficient force is kept throughout the summer months at Khodoortchor itself—and it is very doubtful whether the people would appreciate such an attention—it would be almost impossible for any force from this side to arrive on the spot in time to be of much service, owing to the difficult nature of the country and the entire absence of communications.

It is curious that the people have not emigrated. For many years past it has been the custom of the Khodoortchorlis to leave their families for a certain number of years and seek a livelihood as bakers in Russia; just as the Vanlis have for ages past gone to Constantinople in the capacity of porters, and the people of Egin as bankers or money changers. They are, therefore, not ignorant of the benefits to be obtained by living under a Government where, at all events, a man may enjoy in peace the fruits of his labour. Yet back they come to their secluded valley, in most cases only to lose the greater part of what they had previously gained. Family ties, the affection which these people possess, especially those who dwell in the more mountainous districts, for their homes, and, perhaps, the influence of a priesthood fearful of losing its revenues, are probably some of the principal restraining influences which have hitherto checked any attempt at a general exodus.

The Governors of the central sandjak remain unchanged. The most noteworthy incident since 1882 has been the discovery by the Government of the existence of an Armenian Revolutionary Society. The disclosures on this occasion did not amount to much. Indeed, beyond obtaining possession of a number of papers found on the persons of as many artizans of Erzeroum and labourers belonging to the neighbouring villages, who, in most cases, were unable to read them, papers purporting to bind the owner to put in appearance and do what was required of him when the hour should come, and signed with fictitious initials, no satisfactory information respecting the intentions of the would-be revolutionists appear to have been gained, even though certain methods of extracting information are said to have been resorted to which are not exactly in accordance with modern notions of taking evidence.

The incidents which followed on the discovery of the papers are perhaps to be regretted. It seems that the local authorities, terrified beyond measure, instituted repressive measures which were hardly justified by the circumstances. Guards were doubled, pickets were posted all over the Christian quarters, people were arrested indiscriminately, and, in fact, the importance of the affair greatly magnified. The impress of official excitement quickly stamped itself on the Mussulman population. Fearing a massacre they armed themselves for resistance, and thus a very dangerous situation was created in the city. Fortunately, so soon as the first access of terror had passed away calmer counsels prevailed, and, orders coming from Constantinople prohibiting further arrests, the excitement subsided. Little by little the greater number of those who had been imprisoned were released, and the remainder, in all thirty-seven persons, belonging to the poorer classes, many illiterate villagers were committed for trial, and finally condemned to various terms of imprisonment, ranging from five to fifteen years. For these unfortunate people, victims in every case of the schemes of plotters, of whose intentions, it may safely be said, they knew next to nothing, the clemency of His Majesty the Sultan is still expected. Certainly, their release will in no wise endanger the safety of the State, while their confinement but tends to fill an already overcrowded prison, and causes much suffering to families, which, in some cases, are thus deprived of their only means of support.

Nothing more has been heard of the religious movement which at one time manifested itself among the Christians in the district of Chanous. Being really more political than ecclesiastical in character, and not meeting with the encouragement that was hoped for, it appears to have died out altogether. A considerable number of Circassians have settled in that neighbourhood during the last two years, and it seems that the local government would not be averse to an increase of their numbers, but the introduction into the country of another element of discord, such as they would assuredly prove themselves, is not judicious, and is regarded with no favourable eye by the present inhabitants.

The Vilayet of the Dersym now comprises the Dersym proper and the two sub-districts of Chimish-gadzag and Char-Sanjak, which were detached from the Kharput Vilayet at the time of its creation. The Vali, Fikri Pasha, has the reputation of being an honest and energetic man, and during the three years that he has held this appointment has lost no opportunity of improving the state of things so far as his limited powers will allow of such a course. Since his advent he has devoted particular attention to the little town of Kozat, the seat of Government, and the well-laid streets and good buildings, which are now said to be found there, attest his energy.

It has been his policy to endeavour to win over the Kurds by kindness, and if he has not met with much success it is due rather to the uncompromising attitude of the subordinate officials rather than to any shortcomings of his own. The removal of some of the leading Chiefs would probably be advantageous both to the people and to the Government, for not only do they oppress the former, but by their baneful influence they place every possible obstacle in the way of reconciliation with the authorities. Courts of Justice do not as yet exist, as no authority has been given for the payment of the necessary salaries. Throughout the year seven weak battalions of infantry (about 2,000 men in all) have been quartered in the vilayet, but they do not appear to have succeeded entirely in keeping order. About a month ago it was reported that the Kurds had fired on some barracks, and there is some talk of commencing active operations against them in the spring; but there is nothing to be gained by such a course, and the money would be far better spent in opening up and improving the country.

Kharput.

In January 1883 the Sandjak of Malatia was detached from Diarbekir and made over to Kharput. Since a glance at the map shows that Malatia naturally belongs to Kharput, the present arrangement may be considered an improvement on the old one.

The attempt on the part of the Government last autumn to remove the telegraph office from the city of Kharput to Mezré, a village in the plain where the Government offices are situated, caused so much discontent among the inhabitants of all creeds and classes, that they assembled in large crowds and openly protested against the measure. After several weeks' delay a compromise was effected; the office was removed, but a branch line was left for the inhabitants of the city. The people had some reason to find fault with the new arrangement, as they had previously paid some £ T. 400 out of their own pockets for the erection of the office. Both this fact, and the great anxiety to retain in their city the means of telegraphing, speak well for the prosperity of Kharput. It shows clearly that there is so much need of this rapid means of communication by the people that they cannot get on without it. The discontent so openly displayed shows also a temper that is very unusual in modern times in this country. In fact this instance of a Mahommedan and Christian mob combining and openly protesting against an order from Constantinople is almost unique.

It was lately reported that a large body of Kurds had attacked the prison in Argana Maden, the chief place of the sandjak of that name, and had released the

prisoners. That some twenty-five or thirty prisoners were released is true, but the number of Kurds who made the attack was insignificant, and according to the latest information did not exceed at most half-a-dozen. It is supposed that the Governor, ashamed to publish the success of so small a body of men, increased the amount to exonerate himself.

With the exception of the Sandjak of Malatia, the Vilayet of Kharput presents a picture of comparative order and partial prosperity. This is in a great measure due to the existence of a large and hard-working sedentary population, to its genial climate, to its central position, and, as compared with other vilayets, to a smaller number of marauding Kurds.

Diarbekir.

The Province of Diarbekir, now shorn of Malatia, consists but of the two Sandjaks of Diarbekir and Mardin. Sami Pasha, a well-known General, and a man of considerable ability, is the Governor-General. There is little of a special nature to remark on this vilayet, but it shares to the full with other vilayets those general scandals, defects, and afflictions which will be referred to further on. The southern sandjak bordering on the desert is subject to incursions from the nomad Arabs, and the sedentary population have suffered much at their hands.

Of these Arab tribes the Shammar have been during the past year a long way the most troublesome, and last autumn it was found necessary to send troops from Diarbekir to keep them in order.

Hekkiari.

In 1880 the old Vilayet of Van was dismembered. Hekkiari became a separate province, and Bitlis, taking the Sandjak of Moosh from Erzeroum, was also erected into a vilayet. The three vilayets thus formed out of the old one, with the addition of Moosh, form the jurisdiction of our Vice-Consulate at Van.

The inaccessible nature of Hekkiari renders the possibility of obtaining any information concerning it excessively difficult. On its promotion to the rank of vilayet a certain Hilmi Pasha, a wealthy but avaricious old man, was appointed Governor. He remained there till his death, which occurred on the 21st of last September. It was intended that Djulamerik should be the seat of government, but the absence of all conveniences, together with its inaccessibility, precluded the possibility of carrying out the idea, and up to the present time Bashkaleh on the north-eastern edge of the district of Albak has been considered as the capital.

Though, as stated above, it is difficult, short of personal observation, to obtain reliable information concerning this mountainous district, enough is known to lead to the supposition that the post of Vali of Hekkiari is no sinecure. One of the most important duties of a Governor of a Turkish province is the collection of the taxes. It may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that unless a Governor is a good tax collector he cannot be considered an efficient administrator. But in Hekkiari, as in the Dersym and some other mountainous districts of Asiatic Turkey, the inhabitants have a great aversion to taxation, and the inaccessibility of their fastnesses renders the non-payment comparatively easy. It was in the endeavour to collect taxes, either for the Government or for himself, that the unfortunate Hilmi Pasha may be said to have lost his life. Advancing into the heart of the vilayet, he indiscreetly caused several Chieftains, who refused to pay the money demanded from them, to be arrested with the object of conducting them to Bashkaleh. On the way a rescue was attempted, success attended it, and the Governor barely escaped with his life. On his return to Bashkaleh he was seized with an illness from which he never recovered.

The removal from this vilayet of the celebrated Sheikh Obeydullah, who, escaping from Constantinople, suddenly appeared there in the autumn of 1882, relieved that part of the country and Kurdistan generally of a dangerous intriguer. Imbued with the one idea of forming an independent Kurdistan with himself as ruler, the Sheikh was a source of perpetual uneasiness both to his own Government and to the neighbouring State of Persia. But he is gone, it is to be hoped, for ever; and since he was perhaps the only man capable of holding together the tribes in a body sufficiently compact to cause embarrassment, it may fairly be presumed that the dangerous policy he advocated has disappeared with his person. It is true that there is some talk of the mantle of Obeydullah having fallen on the shoulders of Khalifa Fehim, his former lieutenant, and a Sheikh of some influence residing at Mukus, in the Vilayet of Van; but as yet there are not sufficient grounds for any great anxiety on the subject.

Van.

The Vilayet of Van is under the Governorship of Hassan Pasha, an Albanian of Scutari, and an unquestionably intelligent and able man, though for many reasons not a desirable Governor. In this vilayet the Christian population exceeds the Mussulman, and it appears that their sufferings, more particularly at the hands of the Kurds, have been of late intolerable. In spite of this, last summer the Governor-General influenced, with the promise of decorations, a certain number of Armenian Notables to sign a Declaration addressed to His Majesty the Sultan, praising the administration of the province, and affirming the introduction of reforms to be unnecessary. The result was singular and unexpected. The document having been published, and with it the names of the Notables who had signed, a mob of Armenians gathered round the Bishop's house at a time when the National Council were assembled in it, and attacking the offenders beat them soundly. They then prepared Petitions signed by several hundred of the inhabitants, asserting the falsehood of the previous statement, and forwarded identical copies to the Embassies of some of the foreign Powers at Constantinople. This rather feeble display of feeling would probably have produced some excitement even in countries accustomed to witness such demonstrations; but here, where they are not the fashion, so extraordinary an occurrence occasioned profound astonishment. To those who have studied the character of the people, no clearer proof of gross misgovernment could possibly have been afforded, for nothing short of the most intense appreciation of their desperate condition could have induced them to act in a manner so foreign to their nature.

Bitlis.

The condition of the neighbouring Province of Bitlis is, if possible, worse. On its erection into a vilayet a certain Aarifi Pasha was appointed Governor, and the selection appears to have been particularly unfortunate. This official, instead of administering to the needs of the province, appears to have occupied the whole of his time in studying the most effectual methods of filling his pockets. The result is, a condition of things very similar to that which obtained in the Sandjak of Bayazid under the rule of Ibrahim Effendi, the late Mutessarif. To use the words of our Vice-Consul for Van who recently visited the district, "Bitlis presents the spectacle of an utterly barbarous Mussulman people, plunged in the depths of ignorance, living on a Christian people little less barbarous and ignorant than themselves."

It would be difficult to find names hard enough for the man who advised the dismemberment of the old Van Vilayet. From every point of view the measure was ill-judged. The introduction of a host of officials has led to nothing—as, indeed, might have been anticipated—but an increase of salaries and a decrease of revenue, without any corresponding advantages; and in order to pay these salaries it has been found necessary to employ a system of oppressive taxation, which is fast reducing the people to beggary.

The class of evils which affect, in a greater or less proportion, the whole of the vilayets, may be now examined.

The Increase of Poverty.

The apparently increasing poverty of the Government, and the actually increasing poverty of all classes of the inhabitants, are the questions that principally absorb attention. It is a difficult matter to estimate justly the financial state of the Government. For obvious reasons the figures given in the annual Returns of revenue and expenditure do not convey much information, wherefore the argument principally rests on the increased difficulty that is shown in paying the salaries of the officials, and in complying with any immediate demand for cash to defray unexpected expenses. With regard to the officials, it is only the salaries of the higher class that are not in arrears. A proportion of those of the others are paid, for the most part, in grain, and at a rate which entails a loss of 40 and sometimes of 50 per cent. to the recipients. As with the civil service, so with the army. No officer under the rank of lieutenant-colonel receives his salary in full, and the main of the salaries are being paid at this moment in grain. The state of the private soldier is not enviable. During the three years that he serves with the colours (it is generally nearer four) he receives only five or six months' pay, in some cases less. In order to keep up appearances he is shown in the Returns as having been paid in full, and when passed into the Reserve he is given a draft on the local government at the chief town of his native district for the amount that he is in arrears. A worthless document, which he either never makes

use of or sells for a mere song. And still he serves, though, to judge from the frequent desertions which are effected whenever a convenient opportunity may occur, with some reluctancy. Debts, too, of all kinds are being paid in grain, in order to keep in reserve what money there is for disbursements that must be made in cash; and even on such occasions much backwardness is shown in parting with it.

The poverty of the people is more easily observed. Among merchants, there is no capital and no confidence; among the poorer classes, buyers daily decrease in number, and, as a consequence, in some parts of the country failures of small shopkeepers are of constant occurrence, and local industries are dying out. In some of the vilayets the increase of poverty during the last few years is very marked. On this subject our Agent at Diarbekir says:—

"With the exception of the nomad tribes, the circumstances of the people, particularly of the villagers, are reduced to such an extent that many of them experience great difficulty in procuring the bare necessaries of life, though these are very limited. The wretched hovels in which this latter class are living are now absolutely destitute of furniture of any description, inclusive of bedding, kitchen utensils, and such like, the people having been obliged to sell their all during the famine and subsequent years to support life; and it is not uncommon to meet many who sleep on the bare ground, wrapped only in rags, and who live on food consisting simply of bread made of millet, and soup of the same boiled in water. I do not believe the condition of the townspeople to be much better. Native industry being already paralyzed, those who were formerly engaged in it are mostly out of employment. Mechanics and common labourers find very little work, and pauperism is on the increase, although bread is exceedingly cheap. The streets are full of beggars. Owing to the scarcity of money business is greatly diminished, and consequently failures of small shopkeepers are reported almost every week. It is no wonder then that the people should grow apprehensive of the future."

From Van our Vice-Consul reports that—

"Many villages are almost entirely depopulated of men, as their increasing debts have compelled the males to seek their fortune in Constantinople, Russia, and Persia. Thus agriculture is much neglected, though the soil is fertile; and it is greatly to be feared that, in view of the heavy taxation, the depredations of the Kurds, and general insecurity and oppression, the land will in a comparatively short time be deprived of tillers."

In many other parts of the country the poverty is quite as great. In Bitlis, Hekkiari, and the Dersym, things have been going steadily from bad to worse ever since they became vilayets; in fact, Kharput and Erzeroum are the only two provinces that do not at present exhibit those symptoms of rapid decline so generally visible elsewhere.

The war, and the famine which followed on its heels, are generally credited as being the chief causes of this increase of distress, but the assertion is not quite accurate. It cannot be denied that they were both heavy blows. During the war the country was drained of its supplies, and the capital that they represented has never been returned to it. The bad harvest of 1879 completed the temporary ruin, and occurring at a time when funds were low at Constantinople, and the tax collectors were busy getting in three years' arrears, but little mercy was shown. Governors of provinces, notwithstanding the misery, were more or less inexorable, and thousands of people were compelled to sell their goods and chattels in order to pay their way. But on the other hand, liberal subscriptions flowed in from England and from Constantinople. Considerable quantities of seed were distributed throughout the suffering districts, and since then there have been two seasons following one upon another of lavish abundance. Yet the country, instead of showing symptoms of recovery, exhibits signs of unmistakable decadence. The real explanation lies upon the surface. The unbridled avarice of the officials, the great increase of corruption, the unrestrained oppression of the Kurds, and the almost absolute insecurity of life and property, furnish ample reasons for the decay and ruin of the country apart from natural causes, or even from such important considerations as insufficient and indifferent communications and the absence of enterprise and capital.

Official avarice and corruption have formed the subject of so many reports in recent times that it would be a work of supererogation to discuss the subject. The people submit to it, partly from ignorance, partly from supineness and lethargy, and not a little because the want of cohesion between the particles of which the population is composed offers, in most parts of the country, an insuperable obstacle to combined resistance.

Such subjects too as Kurdish oppression and robbery are not exactly new. If they are again touched upon here, the gravity of the circumstances must be the apology. It is in the eastern and southern vilayets especially that the question has assumed such serious dimensions. Our Vice-Consul at Van writes as follows:—

"In every caza (sub-district) the Kurds are the supreme rulers of the country. They are either befriended by the authorities, or they look on them with contempt. In Mukus, in Shaddakh, and in Arjesh, there is a ruling family which regards Christians as its serfs, and considers the land to be at its own disposal. In Arjesh there is the family of Nalband Oglulou, whose chief representative, Hassan Agha, is a member of the Idaré Medjliss (Administrative Council); the Kaïmakam (Sub-Governor) has not the slightest influence over the greater part of the caza, and anarchy prevails throughout the district. A description of what obtains in one caza is sufficient as a description for all, as the same disorder is everywhere visible. In Shaddakh the family of Gravli are the oppressors, and in Mukus Khalifa Fehim reigns supreme. . . . Khalifa has reduced the Christians in his district to a state of absolute serfage, and persecutes any who resist his authority in a most cruel manner."

Again, in his remarks on the condition of Bitlis, he says:—

"These Christians, the Mussulmans both Turks and Kurds, have succeeded in reducing almost to a state of absolute serfage chiefly through the countenance and aid granted them by the authorities, on whom the whole responsibility rests not of having failed to check an evil system, but of having induced the growth of that system for the sake of enriching themselves at the expense of a subject nation, and of gratifying their hatred of Christians. . . . Lately the Turks have done their utmost to stir up national antipathies, and to induce the Kurds to maltreat, plunder, and despoil the Christian inhabitants, so that it would almost seem that what the Armenians assert is true, namely, that the desire of the Turks is to sweep them from the face of the earth. . . . . In the country the Kurds are permitted, nay encouraged, to harass the Armenians, and the more cruel a Kurd becomes the more he is honoured by the authorities. Sofi, the notorious Chieftain of the Hassananli Kurds, whose hands are red with the blood of countless murders and who has ruined numberless villages, has been appointed by Imperial Iradé Kaïmakam of Melazgerd. It is a proved fact that this man took part in the late robbery of a caravan near Erzeroum, and he is generally supposed to have had a hand in the attack on the post in Melazgerd. Mehemet Ali, the noted robber, has been appointed Ker Serdar of Bulanyk. The Kurdish Beys, Fatoullah and Rashid, the tyrants of the districts of Sassoun, Kharzan, Khizan, and Spargerd, who literally laid waste these territories, and who were arrested and banished to Constantinople by the efforts of Baker Pasha, were pardoned, and His Majesty the Sultan granted them an audience. They returned to Bitlis covered with decorations, and Asrif Pasha is reported to have taken counsel with them how they might best drive the Armenians from the country. . . . The Kurdish robber families are so powerful that I doubt whether it would be safe for a Mussulman to make an effort to administer justice impartially, for there is no question but that the Kurds are entire masters of the situation."

The following extract is from a Report by our Agent at Diarbekir:—

"The Cazas of Silivan, Liga, Midiat, Shurnak, Pahi, Chermuk, and parts of Severak are infested by robbers. Partly from the wide-spread poverty, and partly from causes too obvious to need comment, robbery has become more frequent in the districts above referred to, and it is carried on by the marauding Kurds with the connivance and under the protection of the Chiefs who were sent into exile some years ago by the Imperial Commissioner, his Excellency Abeddin Pasha, and were pardoned and allowed to return to their homes through the clemency of His Majesty the Sultan. Though robbery is so extensively practised, yet but few cases come to the notice of the Government. The victims do not venture to seek reparation, fearing the perpetrators will not be punished, and that they themselves will suffer the penalty of being attacked and robbed a second time."

In the Dersym the Kurds are Kizilbash. Cordially detesting the Government, they are not open to its pernicious influence; while of late there appears to have sprung up between them and the Christians more friendly relations, so that neither in this district nor in the adjacent Province of Kharput is there the same oppression as in the above-mentioned provinces.

This gross persecution, the iniquities of the officials, the highway robbery which has been carried on lately, and especially during last summer, to an extent hitherto, I believe, unprecedented, the robbery and cruelties practised by the zaptiehs

many of whom in the southern districts are themselves Kurdish robbers, have produced their natural consequences. Trade is paralyzed, enterprise and industry have given place to spiritlessness and indolence; bloodshed and emigration are thinning the population, large tracts of fertile soil are becoming waste lands, and there seems little else to wait for but those more violent convulsions which generally precede a country's ruin.

Erzeroum, February 2, 1884.

Memorandum.

Colonel Everett begs respectfully to call the attention of the Commission Department of the Foreign Office to the first paragraph of this Report. In Colonel Everett's Commission the following words occur, "to appoint a Consul for Kurdistan, comprising the Pashalics of Erzeroum, Kharfoot, Diarbekir, Moosh, and Van."

With reference to this sentence it may be observed—

1. That Pashalic is an obsolete term.
2. That there is no such place as Kharfoot.
3. That Moosh is not, and has not been for many years, a vilayet.
4. That the provinces comprised in the Kurdistan Consulate are as stated in the paragraph above mentioned, and not as in Colonel Everett's commission.

Erzeroum, February 2, 1884.

Inclosure 2 in No. 14.

Report by Vice-Consul Eyres on the Vilayet of Van.

(Confidential.)

THOUGH to a superficial observer the administration of the Vilayet of Van and the condition of the population would appear to be superior certainly to those of the neighbouring vilayets, and perhaps to those of most of the provinces subject to the Porte, closer scrutiny brings to light the fact that though the evils of administration are less crying, there are just as many abuses under the surface as in the worst-governed vilayets in Turkey. The fact that there are fewer complaints of misgovernment in Van than in other parts of the Empire is owing entirely to the personal character of the Governor-General, Hassan Pasha.

The Vali: his System of Government.

An Albanian of Scutari, whose father was in revolt against the Porte, Hassan Pasha has no patriotism, and cares little or nothing for advancing the true interests of the Ottoman Empire. But, unquestionably clever and intelligent man as he is, he sees that his own interests are immediately concerned in the possibility of his being always able to present to the world the spectacle of a contented and well-ruled province. All his efforts have accordingly been directed to what may be called a policy of repression. He knows well that if he attempted to remove real abuses and to ameliorate the condition of the oppressed population, the complaints of the Turkish officials on the one hand, and of the Kurdish Chieftains on the other, would soon be sufficient to effect his dismissal. When he first obtained the position of Vali, he undoubtedly had the capacity, and, as far as I can learn, sufficient energy to have thoroughly reformed the country, if only he had been assured of the tenure of his post for a fixed period. Now I very much doubt if he has the energy to carry out wholesale reforms, for habits of indolence have grown upon him, and he is besides advancing in age; but lately he has, I understand, requested the Porte to grant him fixity of tenure of his post for a certain period, and under these circumstances he undertakes so to regulate the administration as to make Van a model vilayet.

Meanwhile, Hassan Pasha pursues his policy of repression. He commenced to put this policy into effect by conniving at corruption among his subordinates. He himself is entirely free from this grave defect, but by permitting others to take bribes he has obtained complete power over them; and woe to the man who attempts to resist him. Should an official be sent to Van who is upright and independent, hitherto the Vali has always succeed in dismissing him by means of false accusations. The late Mutessarif, Shukri Effendi, was a notable instance of this, and at the present time the Vali is engaged in attempts to overthrow the Inspector of Justice, but it is to be

hoped his efforts will fail, as Salih Effendi is one of the best and most honest Turks in Van.

His Excellency, however, does not stop here. The family of the Temour Oghlous, one of the most influential and powerful among the notorious Kurdish families in Van, has hitherto been under his special protection, though they have committed every sort of crime. Lately, it is true, several of this family have been dismissed from posts they held in the administration owing to the insubordination of some members, but their day of reckoning has not come. This is only one instance of many cases in which the Vali has given important offices to scoundrels of the worst description, in order that he may be able to accomplish his own ends by holding over them the fear of punishment for their misdeeds.

The Armenians Hassan Pasha has managed to hold in check, without in any way yielding to their demand for reforms, or ameliorating their condition. I am informed that when certain compromising papers were found, the Vali called the Heads of the Armenian community together, and told them he should not make known the fact that such papers had been found to the Supreme Government, but that he advised them to look to their steps in future. He induces the clerical authorities, and even Archbishop Khrimian, to bow to his will by threats of reporting to the Sublime Porte that they are engaged in revolutionary intrigues. All Armenians fear the Vali; some respect, most hate him.

Under such a system of government, it is natural that matters should go from bad to worse. The officials are allowed to plunder every one, without distinction of race or creed, who falls into their hands, and the Kurds are allowed to oppress the Christians, partly because thus the Armenians are kept down, and partly because some sop is necessary to reconcile the chief families to their abject submission to the Vali. The taxes press year by year with greater severity on the poorer classes, because year by year they are more impoverished, and, as a consequence, more rigour is required in the collecting of them, especially as the vilayet is so reduced in size that the expenditure always exceeds the revenue. The salaries of officials are terribly in arrear; but it is true that this fact tells in favour of Hassan Pasha's powers of administration, as there are very few Governors in Turkey who could hold their position with dignity with so small a province under their authority, and consequently with so small a revenue with which to feed the locusts which swarm round every provincial seat of government.

Condition of Christians.

The condition of the Christians is pitiable. If they complain, no attention is paid to their complaints, and if they attempt to force the Vali's hand, some mysterious misfortune generally befalls the audacious suitors. When Major Clayton first arrived in Van, his presence had a most beneficial effect. The authorities and the Kurds were cowed, and the Armenians encouraged to raise their heads and make some attempt at self-defence; and, in the commencement, the confidence of the latter was justified, for Major Clayton was enabled by the support of Her Majesty's Ambassador to prevent much injustice and oppression. The case of Ferik Osman Pasha, who was dismissed owing to Her Majesty's Vice-Consul's representations, caused a panic among the Turks. The officials began to treat with more justice and equality the Christians who had dealings with them, and I am told that a general reform was visible in the conduct of all Mussulmans, each one fearing to be reported to the English Consul and dismissed. Illegal imprisonments were put a stop to, and the people began to hope that a brighter day had begun to dawn for them. But their hopes were doomed to disappointment. Orders were received from Constantinople to regard the Consuls only as commercial agents, and from that moment the influence of Major Clayton began to decline, and his efforts in behalf of justice and upright dealing to be disregarded. Worse, however, was to follow. It was not in the Vali's nature to permit such an invasion of his rights as the interference of the Consuls in administrative affairs to pass unpunished. He could not punish the Representatives of England and Russia, and so he visited his displeasure on the heads of the unfortunate Armenians. A Report was sent to Constantinople by Samih Pasha (Commandant of Troops) to the effect that the Armenians were leaguing together with the intention of rebelling, and from that moment the condition of the Armenians has progressed steadily for the worse to this day. Their club was shut up, their Societies were dispersed, lectures were forbidden, schools were stopped. Persons engaged in educating children were looked on with suspicion, and the Moumif, or Education Department, was called into existence with the object

of maintaining a strict watch on schools, &c., which object it effects by putting a stop to every means of civilization and progress, as far as lies in its power. That the foolish behaviour of the Armenians on many occasions has given pretexts to the authorities to act as they have I cannot deny, but even granting this, the action of the Government has been most oppressive and tyrannical. The equality of races, of which so much has been written and said, does not exist. All Mussulmans bear arms contrary to law, while the Christians are punished if the smallest weapon is found on their persons, even if they are travelling in notoriously dangerous places. Turkish officials continually insult Christians in public places with foul abuse. Preference is always given to Moslems in the Courts, and no Christian evidence is accepted in the Court of Sheri. Christian members of Councils and Courts are chosen by the order of the Governor-General from the lowest classes, as a rule, though there are many persons of standing who know the Turkish law and language, and who are well fitted for such posts. Elections, properly speaking, there are none. The Vali orders, and his orders are obeyed. Christian officials, even if sent from Constantinople, are not tolerated here. Malicious accusations are brought against them, and they are dismissed. From the Courts, from the post of Mutessarif, and from the telegraph office, able Armenians have been removed within the last three years. In a word, there is hardly a measure which could be adopted to diminish the influence of the Armenians, to break their spirit, and to drive them to despair, that has not been carried into effect during the last few years, but all so gradually, and with such skill, that the voice of complaint has been, if not entirely silenced, at any rate scarcely raised above a whisper.

Courts of Justice.

The administration of justice is at present chiefly in the hands of Ulemas, inasmuch as the Procureur-Général was formerly a Dervish, the President of the Civil Court of First Instance is a Mollah, the President of the Criminal Court of First Instance is also a Mollah recently sent from Constantinople, and in each Court there is a Mollah as a member. This state of things, needless to state, is not calculated to please the Christians, nor is it likely that justice will be properly administered under the auspices of the most fanatical class of Turks in a vilayet where the majority of the population are Christians. As a fact, the Courts of Justice are a mere farce. They are neither more nor less than engines for extorting money from litigants for the benefit of officials. These latter apply all their energy to extracting as much money as possible, and to placing as many delays in the way of suitors as they can. In the Civil Court of First Instance the President and one of the members, Shahbazian Manouk (formerly a cook) are accused of being leagued together to despoil all who have the misfortune to bring a case before their Court. There is no pretence of doing justice, the decision is given against the party who gives the smallest bribes. This bears particularly hardly on poorer litigants, as cases of less than 5,000 piastres cannot be referred to the Court of Appeal; recourse can only be had to the Cour de Cassation at Constantinople, and as that Court takes an incredibly long time to examine into the most paltry questions, it may well be imagined that poor people prefer to acquiesce in the loss of their money rather than go farther and fare worse.

In the Criminal Court Mussulmans and Christians alike, unless they have powerful protectors, are frequently thrown into prison and loaded with chains without investigation; the richer criminals, such as Kurdish robbers, &c., generally manage to bribe themselves free. Sentences also are frequently not communicated to the accused persons. A case occurred the other day which is typical, though in a mild form, of the procedure in this Court. An old Turk was severely beaten in a quarrel with one of his neighbours; he brought an action against the neighbour who assaulted him, and paid various fees required by the Court. He then was required to pay the zaptieh who should arrest his adversary. This he did, and the adversary was in due course brought before the Court, but pleaded not guilty. Witnesses were required on the part of the plaintiff, and were brought. Then the old Turk was again ordered to pay a fee for his witnesses, whereupon he took out two medjidiehs and gave them to the prisoner, saying he had better pay the money at once in a lump to the man for beating him, and he only hoped he would continue to beat whomsoever he desired, as the law permitted such actions to go unpunished.

In the Court of Appeal some six or seven cases only were brought to a termination during the past year, and the arrears are hopelessly bad.

It is, however, only fair to the officials to say that even if they desired to do justice, they would find it impossible, for the pressure from above is too severe. A President of a Court lately told me that in a case where he opposed the Governor-General, and pronounced sentence contrary to his desire, on the ground that the sentence was just and legal, the Governor asked him what he had to do with law and justice, and forced him to reverse his decision. "Our salaries," said the President, "are wofully in arrear now, and if we do not obey the Vali, we shall never receive a piastre." It is clear, therefore, that men whose education does not incline them to behave too honourably, even if there be no drawback to such behaviour, cannot be expected to administer justice impartially when their means of living depend entirely on their submission to the will of a Governor who rarely desires to see justice done. The Cadi, perhaps, is the only exception to the rule, for he is unquestionably an incorruptible Judge, and I believe honestly tries to do his duty as far as the Koran permits him.

The evils that are now prevalent in the administration of justice seem to have existed, though perhaps in a less degree, during Major Clayton's residence here.

It is probable, however, that the system being then new, the officials had not found out at that time how they could best work for their own advantage. Certain it is that matters have never been so bad as now, and I will venture to predict that they could not come to a worse pitch. From Major Clayton's despatches I judge that at that time it was chiefly the Armenians who made an outcry against the Courts, but now there is not one person who is satisfied, from the President of the Court of Appeal to the poorest Kurd or Armenian in Van. The Inspector of Justice, I am told, is an upright man, who, it is hoped, will work some change in the condition of the Courts if he is allowed to retain his office; but hitherto he has not been in Van since my arrival. The Procureur-Général, corrupt and fanatical as he is, would not disgrace his post, according to my judgment, if he were supported in right-doing by the Executive. I say by the Executive because the idea that the Courts are independent and irresponsible has not yet penetrated as far as Van, and the Governor-General is, in fact, the personal director and inspector of justice.

Various Councils and Commissions.

I have already mentioned that no elections are held for Christian members of Councils; everything depends on the Governor-General's will, and the Christians selected for these positions are, as a rule, adherents and tools of his Excellency, ignorant persons and bad characters. The Mussulman members are chiefly chosen from the Kurdish families of Temour Oghlou, Topdji Oghlou, and Djamilidjizade, whose misdeeds are notorious throughout the country.

The Idaré Medjliss exists only to echo the Vali's words. The Municipality is neither better nor worse than such institutions in Turkey as a rule. The President and members eat up the revenues, and nothing is done for the cleanliness of the town or for repair of roads.

Under the new Regulations promulgated some four or five years ago, which are known by the name of Teshkilat Nizam-nmessi, and were considered as an instalment of the promised reforms, five new Councils and Commissions have been established here within the last two years. The description which I am about to give of these Boards will show what is the value of the so-called reforms.

1. *Mouarif Medjliss, or Education Board.*—The first President was an utterly illiterate Mussulman, who considered it most meritorious to close every school it was possible for him to suppress. He gave in his resignation because he failed in shutting up a printing establishment for the use of schools in the monastery of Varak. He was succeeded by another Mussulman who does not seem to be a great improvement on his predecessor; his sole idea is to introduce the study of the Kurdish language into Armenian schools. He has prevented the American missionaries hitherto from opening a school in Arjesh. The Mufettish is a Kurd, who speaks a little French, and concerns himself chiefly with the doings of the foreign Consuls, whose actions, he says, he is bound to report to the Education Department at Constantinople. None of the members can read or write, and are determined enemies of enlightenment and progress.

2. *Board of Agriculture.*—Organized last year, but nothing more has been heard of it.

3. *Defter Hakani, or Land Registration Department.*—A change considerably for the worse. The people were tolerably satisfied with the old Turkish system of sale and purchase of land by "hodjet," and at any rate understood it; whereas the

"tapou" system causes endless quarrels, of which the officials are not slow to take advantage.

4. *Emlak Commission.*—This Commission has this year been employed in the valuation of land for the new land tax. There is no doubt that the members of the Commission seized the opportunity to collect bribes to a large extent, and in many cases valued the land at a terribly high estimate, it is said at twenty times its value. But the Armenians declare that owing to the stupidity of the Commissioners the real object of this new departure was exposed, and they say that the object was to force the Christian owners of land to sell or emigrate in despair. At any rate, the peasantry in the districts of Eljiwaz, Arjesh, and Gardjigan attempted to emigrate *en masse*, but were induced to remain by the promises of the authorities that their complaints should be attended to. This sounds contradictory, but I am told that the Turks were frightened at the effect of their own action, and that it did not suit their policy that it should be publicly known that the Christians had been forced to emigrate. What they desired was a gradual exodus, which has actually taken place in Khizan, which district, I am assured, is more than half depopulated. Succession duty, as fixed by the new law, is also very heavy.

5. *Census Commission.*—It is said that the intention of the Government in taking the Census is to levy a poll tax on all persons without distinction of sex or age.

It will be observed that all this new machinery of oppression has been established since the departure of Major Clayton.

Collection of Taxes.

The collection of taxes by zaptiehs and soldiers, in addition to the recognized tax-collectors, still continues. I observe that many complaints were made from this Consulate about this, but nothing has been done to put an end to the abuse. The zaptiehs and soldiers generally exact considerably more than is due, and maltreat the people who refuse to pay the excess. Then they frequently depart without giving receipts for the money, and the villagers are thus compelled at times to pay taxes three or four times over. It sometimes happens that the country people, quite at a loss whom they shall regard as a responsible official, come to the Treasury in Van to pay over their taxes. But even here every petty official in the Department tries to persuade the unfortunate people to pay the money to himself, and then evades fulfilling the requisite legal formalities. Every village is assessed at a certain amount, on the understanding that the well-to-do are to take the greater part of the burden off the shoulders of their poorer brethren, but as a rule the rich manage to shift their responsibilities on to the poor. Legally no man can be imprisoned for non-payment of taxes, but the prisons of Van are filled with debtors of this description, whose families are thus left destitute. Finally, when every para that can be scraped together has been wrung from the wretched population, the greater part never reaches the Treasury, but is swallowed up by the all-devouring satellites of the Defterdar.

Though the Government are therefore greatly to blame for the poverty and distress everywhere prevalent, the richer Armenians, instead of helping their poor compatriots, take advantage of their need to demand from them a most usurious interest on the loans they are compelled to raise, and I cannot condemn strongly enough the hard grasping spirit which I am sorry to say too many of the Christians of Van show in their dealings with the villagers.

Police.

The gendarmerie is the scourge of the country. It is composed almost entirely from the lowest class of Kurds, frequently themselves robbers and criminals of the worst description. They receive no pay for months together, and they live on the population. It may therefore be better imagined than described what is the condition of a country where life and property are in the guardianship of such rascals as these.

Condition of Peasantry.

The villagers are in this respect better off than the townspeople, for there is no gendarmerie outside the towns, and the people are warned to guard themselves. As a consequence of this all flocks and herds have to be housed at night, and the people complain much of the loss of time entailed by this necessity, but I do not think it is a matter of much importance to them. Many villages are almost entirely depopulated of men, as their increasing debts have compelled the males to seek their fortune in

Constantinople, Russia, and Persia. Thus agriculture is much neglected though the soil is fertile, and it is greatly to be feared that, in view of the heavy taxation, the depredations of the Kurds, and general insecurity and oppression, the land will in a comparatively short time be deprived of tillers.

The Cazas.

In every caza the Kurds are the supreme rulers of the country. They are either befriended by the authorities or they look on them with contempt. In Mukus, in Shaddakh, and in Arjesh there is a ruling family which regards Christians as its serfs, and considers the land to be at its own disposal. In Arjesh there is the family of Nalband Oghlou, whose chief representative, Hassan Agha, is a member of the Idaré Medjliss. The Kaïmakam has not the slightest influence over the greatest part of the caza, and anarchy prevails throughout the district. A description of what [?] in one caza is sufficient as a description for all, as the same disorder is everywhere visible.

In Shaddakh the family of Gravli are the oppressors, and in Mukus Khalifa Febim reigns supreme. Khalifa is desirous of succeeding to the position held by Sheikh Obeydullah, and if the Turkish Government do not take order with him in time, it is not improbable that they will have as much difficulty in dealing with him as they had with the Sheikh. Khalifa has reduced the Christians to a state of absolute serfage, and persecutes any one who resists his authority in a most cruel manner. Tales of murders, robbery, and incendiarism have lately reached me frequently, but there does not seem the least hope that any improvement can be expected from the initiative of the Turkish authorities.

In conclusion, I should be inclined to sum up the present state of the vilayet as in no way improved, and in many ways deteriorated, from what it was when Major Clayton left the country. Justice is not to be obtained in the Courts, the officials are more greedy of bribes, for their salaries fall more into arrear every year, the hardships the Christians suffer at the hands of the Kurds have increased, taxes are heavier, the people are more impoverished, and the richer Armenians take advantage of their poverty; the police are useless, or worse than useless, and the public is at their mercy. No abuses have been remedied, and the so-called reforms are simply new engines of oppression and tyranny designed to throw dust in the eyes of Europe.

Van, January 4, 1884.

Inclosure 3 in No. 14.

Report by Vice-Consul Eyres on the Vilayet of Bitlis.

(Confidential.)

IN my despatch No. 6 of the 15th September I gave a short statement of the state of the Vilayet of Bitlis from such observations as I was able to make during my short stay in that town, and though I have attempted to procure information from various persons since, the reports that I have received have been mostly repetitions and amplifications of what I have already described, or complaints from the Armenians of the misery they suffer at the hands of the authorities and the Kurds. However extravagant and improbable the latter may seem to persons who have not been in Bitlis, I do not think they are exaggerated. Bitlis presents the spectacle of an utterly barbarous Mussulman people, plunged in the depth of ignorance, living on a Christian people little less ignorant and barbarous than themselves. These Christians the Mussulmans, both Kurds and Turks, have succeeded in reducing almost to a condition of serfage, chiefly through the countenance and aid granted them by the authorities, on whom the whole responsibility rests, not of having failed to check an evil system, but of having induced the growth of that system simply for the sake of enriching themselves at the expense of a subject nation and of gratifying their hatred of Christians. When Bitlis was still a Kaïmakamlik, I am assured that the country was in a much more tranquil and safe condition. About four years ago, however, unhappily, it was thought desirable to make Bitlis a vilayet centre, in order to bring the people of the district more under the power of the Turkish Government. An influx of greedy officials followed, and the people, who had begun to emerge from their benighted condition, were gradually driven back into hopeless savagery and barbarism. Previous to the formation of the vilayet the Kurds and Armenians lived, I am told, on tolerably good terms with each other, though the latter were not always free from

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oppression and tyranny, but lately the Turks have done their utmost to stir up national antipathies, and to induce the Kurds to maltreat, plunder, and despoil the Christian inhabitants, so that it would almost seem that what the Armenians assert is true, namely, that the desire of the Turks is to sweep the Armenians from the face of the earth.

The Staff of the Vilayet.

If such had indeed been the policy of the Sublime Porte, they could scarce have found tools better suited to the work than the present staff of officials. The Governor-General, Aarif Pasha, is a low-class, ignorant man, and is the most shameless bribe-taker I have met with. He sacrifices everything to the one object of making money, and appears to have been very successful in attaining it. The ordinary means of extorting bribes are not sufficient for him. He is said to be in league with all the chief Kurdish marauders, and to participate in their spoils by levying black-mail in return for protection. He professes, it is true, favourable sentiments towards the Christians, and pretends to be much rejoiced at the progress of education under the American missionaries, but as a matter of fact he is most hostile to Christians, and his friendship for the American missionaries has been sufficiently put to the test by the way he has treated the case against Moussa Beg.

The Defterdar, Hussein Beg, is but a very slight improvement on his chief, but he is not so actively malevolent. He is a drunkard, and very fanatical, and naturally follows the example of corruption set to him by the Vali. The Mektoubdji is the brother of Salih Effendi, the late Mutessarif of Sert, now in the same position at Moosh, and these two, with the Defterdar, are looked upon by the Armenians as their mortal enemies. The posts of emolument in the vilayet are filled with their creatures, and no check being brought to bear on them by the Vali, the administration is entirely in their hands. They delegate their power in the town to the Turks, who are allowed to wreak their will on the wretched people, and the tales of nightly robbery and murder become so frequent that they are looked upon as matters of no importance. In the country the Kurds are permitted, nay, encouraged, to harass the Armenians, and the more cruel a Kurd becomes, and the more crimes he commits, the more he is honoured by the authorities. Sofli, the notorious chieftain of Hassanauli Kurds, whose hands are red with the blood of countless murders, and who has ruined numberless villages, has been appointed by Imperial Irade Kaimakam of Mehzgerd. It is a proved fact that this man took part in the late robbery of a caravan near Erzeroum, and he is generally supposed to have had a hand in the attack on the post in Mehzgerd. Mehemet Ali, the noted robber, has been appointed Ker Sirdar of Boulanyk. The Kurdish Begs, Fatoullah and Rashid, the tyrants of the districts of Sasson, Kharzan, Khizan, and Sporgerd, who literally laid waste these territories, and who were arrested and banished to Constantinople by the efforts of Baker Pasha, were pardoned, and His Majesty the Sultan granted them an audience. They returned to Bitlis covered with decorations, and Aarif Pasha is reported to have taken counsel with them how they might best drive the Armenians from the country.

The Armenians themselves when they obtain position of importance and responsibility seem to be worse than, or at any rate as bad as, the Turkish officials. Such is the utter demoralization induced by the tyranny under which they live, that the same man who complains bitterly of all he suffers and of the injustice he is compelled to put up with is engaged in inflicting exactly those very wrongs on his inferiors. Avedis Effendi Khatchmanougian, an Armenian of some intelligence and capacity, who had therefore less excuse for his misdeeds than the ordinary ignorant Turk or Kurd, made use of his opportunities, when President of the Municipality, for the most extensive misappropriation of funds, and rivalled the Vali in his capacity for securing bribes and illicit gains.

The Protestants are also harassed and annoyed by the Armenians in every possible way, and the latter, while demanding toleration for themselves, seem very little inclined to grant it to others.

Justice.

The officials of justice are not in any way superior to the Executive. The Cadi, indeed, is not a bad specimen of his class, but he is naturally fanatical, and not given to decide any cases in favour of Christians. The President of the Criminal Court of First Instance is generally drunk, and, apart from that, utterly unfit for his position, as he is ignorant of law and uneducated. The Kurdish members are naturally perfectly ignorant, and there is only one Armenian member, Seropé Sholigian, who has

any pretence to knowledge sufficient for his place. The "Destour" is totally disregarded; the Presidents have been heard to declare that they are placed there to decide cases, and their decision is the law, no reference can be made to books. The same abuses exist here as in other places in Turkey. The Judges are venal, and endless delays weary out both plaintiff and defendant. Turks and Christians both suffer from the bad administration of justice, but it is certain that the sufferings of the Christians far exceed those of the Turks. The poor of both denominations undergo great hardships at the hands of the rich, but Armenians, whether rich or poor, never have been known of late years to carry a case against Mussulmans. The Kurdish robber families are, however, so powerful that I doubt whether it would be safe for a Mussulman to make an effort to administer justice impartially, for there is no question but that the Kurds are entire masters of the situation.

Police.

The gendarmerie are a body of unpaid Kurdish rascals, who assist in most of the robberies which take place in the town. They are chiefly employed in collecting taxes, and even in the town are permitted to maltreat defaulters most cruelly. No delay is granted, nor are the miserably poor villagers allowed to pay in instalments according to law. I am informed that whenever the zaptiehs are in especial want of money, they band together, and on the pretence of collecting taxes they go from village to village, living on the inhabitants, and compelling those who have barely enough to keep body and soul together to support them for weeks in succession.

General Condition.

In fact, the Armenians protest that their condition is unendurable, and that they must either emigrate or die of starvation. It is true that they have been making this declaration for the last four years, but many have emigrated, and I must say I cannot understand how those who still remain do manage to exist. When Major Clayton visited Bitlis he described the Kurds as rampant, and therefore I should be inclined to believe that there is very little difference between the condition of the peasants now and then. But the Kaimakam was an energetic and upright man, though the force at his disposal was not sufficient for him to maintain tranquillity and security in his district. Therefore, under the new infliction of a band of officials whose depredations are certainly as great as those of the Kurds, the vilayet must be infinitely more disorganized than the caza. Indeed every one I spoke with agreed in saying that this was the case. One man told me, "We thought matters could not be worse than they were two years ago, but since then our sufferings are doubled."

And yet if the Sublime Porte did but know its own interests, nothing could be easier than to tranquillize and pacify the province. The Government would have to discard its present fatal policy of supporting Aghas. These are the real disturbing elements of the country, and these once suppressed, the country would soon settle down, if not harassed by bad Governors, as in that case a *modus vivendi* for the Kurds and Armenians would be very quickly found, since these peoples are not radically antipathetic.

January 4, 1884.

Inclosure 4 in No. 11.

Report by Vice-Consul Eyres on the Vilayet of Hekkiari.

HEKKIARI is a vilayet only in name. It is only some thirty years since it was brought under the rule of the Sublime Porte, the Kurdish Beys having been previously quite independent. Till three years ago a Mutessarif was the principal official in the district, but the Porte saw fit to appoint a Vali to Bashkaleh. Except for the nomination of a few extra employés, nothing further has been done as yet to complete the formation of the vilayet. The Vali, indeed, was a most unfortunate selection for a post where a man of energy and intelligence would have found great difficulties in the construction of even the rough machinery of government. Hilmi Pasha, the person chosen for this difficult duty, was an old and feeble man with no remarkable qualities, except an intense love of money. Even had he had the will to attempt the administration of a province in so complete a state of disorder, he was too

enfeebled by age to have been able to carry out his desires; but, as a fact, he applied himself entirely to the accumulation of wealth. With such a Governor it may easily be understood that a complete state of anarchy must prevail in a district where the Kurds are as yet semi-independent, and the Nestorians are entirely so in many places. Formerly, when the Kurds were the nominal as well as the real rulers of the country, they treated their serfs, the Christians, with kindness, in so far as such treatment was necessary to insure their material well-being; but now that the Kurds are plundered by the Turks, they in turn seek to compensate themselves by robbing all who are weaker than they. Hekkiari also being a frontier vilayet, the various Chieftains on either side the border are continually engaged in raids into the enemy's country, and it is, of course, the peaceable villagers who suffer most in their indiscriminate forays. The Government officials encourage the Kurdish Beys in their course of action, as it is a fruitful source of income to themselves. They receive bribes to wink at murders, and share in the proceeds of robberies. It is for this reason that these functionaries leave no stone unturned to convince the Sultan and Sublime Porte that the Aghas and Beys are necessary to preserve subordination throughout the country, and that it is only owing to these Chiefs that a revolution has not long ago taken place; and it is belief in their misrepresentations which induces the Sultan to maintain a friendly attitude towards the Beys. The fact is, however, that until these turbulent leaders are removed or subjected to stern authority, there can be no peace for the country wherein they reside.

In the Vilayet of Hekkiari there are two Mutessariflks, viz., the central one of Bashkaleh and Gever, and five Kaïmakamliks—Serai, Julamerik, Tehal, Shemdina, and Amadia. It was intended to make Julamerik a sandjak, but hitherto this intention has not been carried into effect. In Nurduz and Jelo there are Kurdish Mudirs; but the Turkish authorities have not the slightest influence in Jelo, Tiari, Tehoub, Baz, Dez, Oramar, Tehal, or Shemdina. The principal Nestorian districts are: Julumerik, Tiari, Tehoub, Baz, and Jelo; though in the latter there are more Kurds than Nestorians. The inhabitants of the plains alone may be said to be subjects of the Turkish Government, as in the mountains the people are entirely independent. No taxes are paid, and the officials claim no jurisdiction in those parts.

What officials there are in Hekkiari are, for the most part, entirely uneducated and ignorant. There is no check on them in that wild country, and they make the utmost use of their opportunities to misconduct themselves. It is said that at Bashkaleh an "Idaré-i-Koifié" prevails, that is, the rich and powerful do as they like, the poor and weak go to the wall. It is true that the reformed method of procedure has been introduced into the Courts of Justice, but it is obvious that a system which is suited to a civilized country is utterly out of place and useless in a barbarous district like Hekkiari. Even if justice were administered by capable and honest men, the methods of civilization would fail in a place where the Government has no authority. It is a simple farce to send a summons to a mountaineer to attend a Court, when he knows perfectly well that no one can force him to appear unless he chooses. Besides, there are hardly any persons who understand the Turkish language, and certainly none who are equal to expressing themselves in the higher tongue. This is a source of very unfair dealing towards Christians; for Kurds are allowed to speak in their own language, while Christians are obliged to use Turkish. The officials of justice, however, far from being capable and honest, are the very reverse. Moslem members of Courts are taken, I am told, without exception, from the great Kurdish families, the members of which are most unlettered and barbarous. Their idea of justice would be, in any case, most primitive, but as they generally are required to give judgment on their relations and friends, a trial is an empty form with a foregone conclusion. The Christian members are equally ignorant, and almost stand in the position of serfs; therefore they are totally powerless to aid their co-religionists when oppressed. But the President of the Criminal Court of First Instance, Hadji Mustafa Effendi, stands forth pre-eminent, by common accord, as the worst tyrant the people have to deal with in these parts. Corrupt, vindictive, and fanatical, he is a most deadly enemy to Christians; and openly expresses his opinion that former Sultans have made a great mistake in not exterminating these pests. His enmity would not be of much importance were it not for his influence; but he is the most powerful man in Bashkaleh. He is supported by Hassan Pasha, and by the family of Temour Aghlous; and laughs at the efforts made both by Major Clayton and Major Kumsaragan to obtain his dismissal. It is impossible to obtain a conviction against a real malefactor in his Court, in spite of the efforts of the Persian and Russian

Consuls, while to be a Christian is sufficient cause for imprisonment without trial. Infamous tyrant though he be, hitherto complaint and protest have met with no success, but the discontent on account of his non-dismissal has reached so high a pitch that I am inclined to think the Sublime Porte would not have permitted his reappointment to his present post, on the departure of Major Clayton, had it been informed of the real facts of the case; for it could hardly be considered worth while to risk so much for the sake of supporting one Mussulman.

The peasantry of the lower lands are perhaps in a worse condition in this vilayet than anywhere else, for the soldiery and police, when collecting taxes, are more openly oppressive than they dare to be in other parts. In addition to this they are robbed on all sides. The Kurds, who dwell in the districts where the Turks have authority, levy black-mail from the villagers, and, further, the mountaineers harry them continually. The Nestorians, who are independent, especially in Tiari and Tehoub, do not go out of their way to plunder and rob, but they take toll from every one who has the hardihood to enter their strongholds. The authorities assist the Kurds in entrapping the wretched people into positions, to escape from which they have to give enormous bribes. Last year the Kaïmakam of Serai, Hussein Agha, when counting the flocks for the collection of the sheep-tax, acting on the suggestion of Timour Agha, Chief of the Milauli Kurds, advised the villagers to escape to the mountains with half their flocks, in order to avoid payment of the tax on the whole. The simple people were taken in, and the Kaïmakam at once ordered soldiers to proceed to the places where the flocks were secured and seize them, as according to law they might be confiscated for an attempt to avoid payment. The people were compelled to pay large sums of money in order to avoid total ruin. In fact, every sort of ruse is practised to extort money. The tithe collectors delay the assessment of the harvest till it rots on the ground, and live on the people in the meanwhile; soldiers are billeted on the villagers; a battalion, when marching, literally lays waste the country on the line of march, for not a para is paid for the provisions and fodder they consume, and frequently the villagers are compelled to give their beasts of burden gratis for the transport of baggage. On the road between Van and Bash-Kaleh I am assured that many villages are completely ruined and depopulated.

Under these circumstances, it is not to be wondered at if the Christians of Elpak, seeking some means of escape from their woes, decided to embrace the Orthodox faith in order to obtain Russian protection; the only marvel is, that the people have hitherto as a rule borne their sufferings in patience and have not emigrated, for wheresoever in this district the Turkish Government has succeeded in establishing its dominion, the utter ruin of the population has followed as surely as day follows night.

Inclosure 5 in No. 14.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Lieutenant-Colonel Everett.

(No. 2.)

Sir, *Diarbekir, January* 25, 1884.

IN connection with my despatch No. 14 of the 31st December, I beg to inclose a tabular statement, lately communicated to me by the Rev. Mr. Andrews, resident American missionary at Mardin, regarding the crimes committed in the Caza of Midiat (Mardin Sandjak) in less than nine months, viz., from the 25th March to the 29th November, 1883, which will clearly show not only the present state of things in some parts of this province, but also the powerlessness of the executive and unwillingness of judicial officials to grapple with the evil, and bring to justice the perpetrators of the ever-increasing crimes.

The people, as you will doubtless notice from the brief observations, were, in many cases, reluctant to appeal to the authorities, having either no hope of obtaining redress, or, worse still, watching for an opportunity to revenge themselves on their enemies.

Were it possible to obtain accurate statistics from other cazas as to the crimes committed in them within the period above mentioned, the result, I fear, would not be very encouraging.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

Inclosure 6 in No. 14.

Casualties in Caza of Midiat (Mardin Sanjak) between the 25th March and 29th November, 1883.

Place.	Nationality.	Date.	Killed.	Wounded.	Houses Plundered.	Observations.
Nihle	Moslem ..	Mar. 25 ..	1	6	3	Case still in hands of Government. No conclusion.
Baslerin	Christian ..	April 25 ..	1	..	3	One man in prison; the rest at large.
Ahlab	.. ..	May 10 ..	2	..	..	Government inquired, but unable to arrest.
Arbo	.. ..	.. 21 ..	..	..	..	Police examined; but unable to arrest.
Khamhia	Moslem ..	June 6 ..	..	1	..	No complaint.
.. .. ..	.. ..	.. 24 ..	..	..	3	Case examined, but nothing further.
Hasebrin	Christian ..	July 26 ..	2	1	4	Goods and 450 sheep taken. Appeal fruitless.
Kfr or Derhaf	Moslem ..	.. 24 ..	1	..	..	No inquiry, though case known of.
Kundik and Ahlb ..	.. ..	.. 22 ..	2	4	..	Police sent, but no arrest.
Bati	Christian ..	.. 27 ..	..	1	..	Unable to bring parties to trial.
Hnur	Moslem ..	Aug. 3 ..	2	14	6	Government merely ordered arrest.
Derik and Kharab-Cazir ..	.. ..	.. 6 ..	..	..	11	No attention paid to complaints.
Name Dari	.. ..	.. 15 ..	2	1	6	No arrest.
Bahwar	.. ..	.. 20 ..	..	3	2	No complaint.
Hnikent	.. ..	.. 26 ..	2	..	..	Ditto.
Zakhorm	.. ..	Sept. 5 ..	..	2	..	Ditto.
Brookh	.. ..	.. 5 ..	..	..	..	Two hundred sheep carried off. Government not informed.
Heshterek	.. ..	.. 21 ..	1	2	15	No inquiry.
Midiat	Christian ..	.. 25 ..	..	1	..	Inquiry, but nothing further.
Sumlieh	Moslem ..	Oct. 4 ..	..	2	..	Case still in hands of Government.
Derik	.. ..	.. 29 ..	1	..	..	Inquiry, but no arrest.
Penerzi	.. ..	Nov. 3 ..	..	..	1	No complaint.
Midiat	Christian ..	.. 11 ..	..	..	1	A thief arrested, but nothing further.
Basukli	Moslem ..	.. 15 ..	2	1	3	No complaint.
Heshterek	.. ..	.. 25 ..	1	..	1	Ditto.
Housik	.. ..	.. 29 ..	1	2	3	Government visited spot and arrested murderers.
			22	45	61	

No. 15.

Earl Granville to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 104.) *Foreign Office, March* 27, 1884.

My Lord,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 85 of the 8th instant, in which you forward Reports on the condition of the Vilayets of Erzeroum, Van, Hekkiari, and Bitlis.

Her Majesty's Government approve your action in causing these Memoranda to be translated and transmitted to the Grand Vizier, as reported in that despatch.

I am, &c.

(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 16.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received April 28.)

(No. 122.) *Constantinople, April* 12, 1884.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch addressed to Colonel Everett by the British Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on the gradual spread of Russian influence in the Vilayet of Hekkiari.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 16.

Vice-Consul Eyres to Colonel Everett.

(No. 9. Confidential.) *Van, March* 16, 1884.

Sir,

I BEG to call your attention to a fact which is becoming increasingly evident, namely, that the Christians of Hekkiari, and especially the Nestorians, are falling daily more and more under the influence of Russia. Hitherto there has always existed a party which was opposed to the idea of Russian protection, a small party it is true, but composed of men of great influence among the Nestorians, the Patriarch Marshimoon being the leader. Lately, however, I have heard that considerable sums of money have been distributed, and though my information did not come from a perfectly trustworthy source, it is corroborated by the later news that Marshimoon has decided to throw in his lot with the partizans of Russia. This is not in any way surprising, as the Patriarch is notoriously corrupt and greedy.

I have reason to believe that Major Kamsaragan, the Russian Vice-Consul for Van, was sent by his Government expressly to foster the sentiment of friendship manifested by the Nestorians towards Russia, to encourage them to look to that country for protection, and to cement, as it were, an informal alliance. He distributed decorations to the Patriarch and other Nestorians.

While in the Vilayet of Mosul, the Russian Vice-Consul received a Petition signed by a considerable number of Jacobites, requesting Russian protection.

The Armenians of Elpak have, however, been persuaded to withdraw their adhesion to the Mazbata which I stated had been sent to Tiflis, in my despatch of the 9th October, 1883.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 17.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 133.) *Constantinople, April* 22, 1884.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 67 of the 25th February last, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Colonel Everett, reporting that the Governors of Bitlis and Van have been dismissed, and that their respective places are to be filled by Fikri Pasha, the present Governor of Dersym, and Hamdi Pasha, the Mutessarif of Orfa. Colonel Everett also states that Edhem Pasha, Mutessarif of Damascus, is to succeed the late Hilmi Pasha as Governor of Hekkiari.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 17.

Colonel Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 13.) *Erzeroum, April* 9, 1884.

My Lord,

I HAVE learnt with great pleasure that Aarifi Pasha, the Governor of Bitlis, and Hassan Pasha, the Governor of Van, are at last dismissed; and I beg to be allowed to thank your Excellency for having obtained their removal.

I have been given to understand that Fikri Pasha, now Governor of the Dersym, will replace Aarifi Pasha, that Hassan Pasha will be succeeded by Hamdi Pasha from Orfa, and that Edhem Pasha, Merkess (Central) Mutessarif of Damascus, will be promoted to the Governorship of Hekkiari, vacant by the death of Hilmi Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT,
Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan.

No. 18.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 140.) *Constantinople, May* 3, 1884.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatches to your Lordship Nos. 134 and 135 of the 21st and 24th ultimo, I have the honour to state that in my recent conversations with the Minister for Foreign Affairs upon the subject of the difficulties thrown in the way of the Protestant schools in Armenia and Asia Minor, I was careful to point out to

his Excellency that the Protestant community was the most harmless and least aggressive of any of the Christian sects in Turkey, and that it was one in which a large and powerful section of the English people took a very great interest, and that consequently any wrong done to them would be sure to raise a storm of indignation in the English press and in Parliament.

Assim Pasha observed, in reply, that he was fully aware that such was the case, and added that nothing could be further from the desire of the Imperial Government than to encourage the provincial authorities to impose petty persecutions upon the class in question. On the contrary, the Sublime Porte had always recommended them to afford the Christian communities, without exception, all possible facilities, as long as the objects they had in view were legitimate and in accordance with the laws and regulations in force in the Ottoman Empire.

His Excellency proceeded to say that if in some quarters the provincial authorities had been under the necessity of closing certain Protestant scholastic establishments, it was owing to the neglect of the missionaries themselves, who before erecting their schools or churches had failed to provide themselves with the necessary Firman, or to fulfil the other formalities required by the law.

Assim Pasha informed me, in conclusion, that a favourable Report had been drawn up by the local authorities respecting the Protestant school in the Vilayet of Kharpout, that the Report had been recently submitted to the consideration of the Council of Ministers, and that he would do his best to cause the necessary authorization to be granted with as little delay as possible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 19.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received May 7.*)

(No. 151.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 3, 1884.

WITH reference to my despatch to your Lordship No. 558 of the 4th October last, in which I transmitted two Reports from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond respecting the Kara-hissar and Kerassond road, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship a further despatch on this subject from Mr. Biliotti, stating that the question as to whether it is the duty of the authorities of Trebizond or that of the Governor of Sivas to complete the junction section of 6 miles on the boundary of the two vilayets has not yet been settled by the Sublime Porte.

On the receipt of the above two Reports from Mr. Biliotti, in September last, I called the attention of the Sublime Porte to the importance, from a commercial point of view, of deciding this question at once; but as I have ascertained that no steps have been taken by the Government towards its solution, I now propose to furnish Assym Pasha with a *pro-memoriâ* on the subject, reiterating my previous representations, and begging his Excellency to cause such orders to be given as will settle the matter without further delay.

As Mr. Biliotti justly observes in his despatch, should this question not be decided this year by the Sublime Porte, it will be highly prejudicial to the English Company working the Lidjessy mine, as, in the absence of a waggon road, they are without efficient means of transporting their ore from the mines to the sea-shore.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 19.

Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Dufferin.

My Lord,

Trebizond, April 17, 1884.

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 39, 42, and 43, of September last, I have the honour to submit to your Lordship that the question as to whether it is the duty of the Vali of Trebizond, or that of the Vali of Sivas, to complete the junction-section of 6 miles on the boundary of the two vilayets, has not yet been decided by the Porte, and that there is not the smallest chance of its being settled between the two Valis. Should this question be not decided at once by the Porte, this year will also elapse without the

Lidjessy mine being placed in communication by a waggon road with the sea-shore, a point of great importance for the British Company working it, as they shall not be able to transport their ore.

It is true that the construction of the road on that side of the spot in contestation made little progress last year, owing to the shortcomings of two officials of the Vilayet of Sivas, the same who, moved by pecuniary motives, had promised to induce Rifaat Pasha to construct the contested 6 miles. (Reference to my No. 42 of the 19th September last.)

The road was not made passable even for mules, a result which greatly disappointed the manager of the mine, who made important outlays to expedite the work, and very much annoyed Rifaat Pasha, and justly so.

However, knowing the deep interest which this functionary takes in road-making, I am certain that he will push the work with his usual energy, in order to complete it as early as possible.

The road between Kerassond and the frontier was finished, but early winter prevented the last touch to be given to it, and heavy rains that followed caused some damage. Though a few spots presented great difficulties, it was, however, practicable for waggons during the last winter.

Sirri Pasha is only waiting for fine weather to proceed himself to Kerassond, and put the last hand to the road. The necessary repairs may be completed in a month.

Therefore, the only apparent drawback is—and so long as the Porte does not take a decision on the subject will continue to be—the contested 6 miles between Koolak-kaya and the Bridge of Sullu.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 20.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received May 10.*)

(No. 153.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 4, 1884.

I UNDERSTAND that the Russian Government have refused to acquiesce in the mode of election desired by the Armenians of Turkey in reference to the vacant office of Catholicos of Etchmiazin. As a consequence, some of the leading members of the Armenian community here suggest that their co-religionists should abstain from taking part in the forthcoming election, and should recognize as the supreme spiritual Head of the Armenian Church in Turkey either the Catholicos of Sis or the Catholicos of Aghtamar, both of whom reside on Turkish territory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 21.

Earl Granville to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 150.)
My Lord,

Foreign Office, May 14, 1884.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 151 of the 3rd instant, in which you transmit a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond on the subject of the Kerassond-Kara-hissar road; and Her Majesty's Government approve the action which you are taking in order to induce the Porte to complete the junction-section of 6 miles on the boundary of the two vilayets, as reported in that despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 22.

Consul-General Perry to Earl Granville.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 7.)
My Lord, *Odessa, May 14, 1884.*

Mr. STEVENS, the Acting British Vice-Consul at Kertch, under date of the 9th instant, informs me that he has heard from a perfectly trustworthy source that between 50,000 and 60,000 Circassians are expected to emigrate during the present year from the north-western districts of the Caucasus to Turkey, and that it is believed that 120 families, or between 700 or 800 adults, will arrive at Taman, a village on the Caucasian side of the Straits of Kertch, on or about the 10th (22nd) instant, and that arrangements are being made to procure passages for them by British and other steamers to Constantinople.

The emigration of Circassians would appear to have been going on for the past two years, and it is expected that the number of emigrants will be very large. Their reasons for leaving the country are to avoid compulsory military service, as also, because being all Mahommedans, they are unwilling to remain under Russian rule.

I will request Mr. Stevens to procure me further particulars for transmission to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD RAOUL PERRY.

No. 23.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 161.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 11, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 133 of the 22nd ultimo, in which I informed your Lordship that the Valis of Bitlis and Van had been recalled and replaced, I have the honour to transmit a copy of a despatch addressed by Mr. Eyres to Colonel Everett, from which your Lordship will perceive that the Defterdar of Van has also been dismissed from his post.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 23.

Mr. Eyres to Lieutenant-Colonel Everett.

(No. 13.)
Sir, *Van, April 8, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to state that Aarify Pasha, Governor-General of Bitlis, has been dismissed, and Fikri Pasha, Vali of the Dersim, is appointed to replace him. The Defterdar of Van is also dismissed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 24.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 162.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 11, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 674 of the 12th December last, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Colonel Everett, stating that the Armenians of the Albak district have withdrawn their adhesion to the Mazbata, which they, in conjunction with the Nestorians, addressed to the Russian Government expressing their desire to adopt the Orthodox religion.

The Nestorians, on the other hand, appear to persevere in their previous resolution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Lieutenant-Colonel Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 21.)
My Lord, *Erzeroum, April 30, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 56 of the 28th November, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Armenians of the district of Albak have withdrawn their adhesion to the Mazbata, which, together with the Nestorians, they had drawn up, and in which they requested to be allowed to join the Russian Greek Church.

The Nestorians, however, still persevere in the previous resolution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT.

No. 25.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 173.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 21, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 151 of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I recently took an opportunity of placing in the hands of the Minister of Public Works a *pro-memoriâ* reiterating the request made to the Sublime Porte by this Embassy on the 15th October last, that the Central Government would lose no further time in settling the question that has arisen with regard to the junction of the Kerasound-Kara-hissar road.

His Excellency Raif Effendi at once directed M. Galland, the Director of the engineering department of the Ministry of Public Works, to furnish him with a report upon the subject, and promised me to give the matter his most careful attention.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 26.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 177. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 25, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 133 of the 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch which I have received from Colonel Everett, recording the impression made upon him by the newly-appointed Valis of Van and Hekkiari, who recently passed through Erzeroum on their way to their posts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 26.

Consul Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 24. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Erzeroum, May 16, 1884.*

HAMDI PASHA, the new Vali of Van, and Edhem Pasha, the new Vali of Hekkiari, arrived here last week.

Hamdi Pasha, although but 62 years of age, looks very much older. He is rather a pleasant man to talk to, but I am afraid is not by any means the sort of man required for Van, being evidently a Turk of the old school, and I should say not gifted either with much energy or intelligence. He leaves for his post to-morrow.

Edhem Pasha, who left for Hekkiari the day before yesterday, is younger and possibly more energetic than his colleague of Van he understands a little French; and

has altogether a more intelligent air, but I must confess that he too disappoints me, and I fear will not prove a great success.

I sincerely trust that in both cases I may be mistaken.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT.

No. 27.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 178.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 25, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Angora, reporting the improvement that has taken place in the administration of that vilayet since the accession to office of the new Governor-General, Aziz Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 27.

Vice-Consul Barnham to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 2.)
My Lord, *Angora, May 17, 1884.*

I HAVE abstained from troubling you with Reports upon the government of the Angora Vilayet, because the administration of the province has, during the greater part of the past two years, had little to distinguish it from that of other vilayets in Anatolia, having been in all respects feeble and corrupt, and without hope of improvement.

In June 1883 Hadji Akif Effendi was replaced as Vali by Ismail Hakki Pasha, a nominee of the Palace at Constantinople, who had previously held the position of Governor of Sivas. The same habits of intemperance and corruption by which Ismail Hakki Pasha gained an infamous reputation in Sivas were displayed even more conspicuously in Angora, and it was with great satisfaction that I heard of his removal to Chios in March last, and of the appointment of our present excellent Governor, Aziz Pasha, in his place.

I am tempted to lay before your Lordship the result of some of the work done by this gentleman during the very short period (only six weeks) of his residence here. He found on his arrival that large arrears of business had accumulated, and that justice had been unduly delayed owing to the frequent absence of the officials from their duties, and he took the earliest opportunity of making it known that he required all officials to be in future punctual in their attendance.

The practice of giving and receiving bribes is universal in Angora. Until recently it had been conducted with all possible secrecy, but during the brief period when the Mutessarif acted as Vali *ad interim*, bribes were exchanged openly, and the Mutessarif would rarely perform any duty where he could not exact a consideration for performing it.

Aziz Pasha, having understood that the Mutessarif, Defterdar, and Sanduk Emini had each received sums from the Government cash-box a few days before his arrival, for which no explanation could be given, compelled them each to give receipts for the amounts, as sums paid on account of their salaries, and gave them clearly to understand that he would tolerate no such abuses while he remained in charge of affairs here.

Two officers of gendarmerie were by his order brought to trial for abuses committed in the outlying villages of Angora, and one of them, Bin Bashi Halil Agha, was last week condemned to degradation and six months' imprisonment.

The Vali has taken active measures to repress brigandage, which has greatly increased within the past year. He has organized a corps of gendarmerie, small in numbers, but well chosen, and distributed it over the vilayet, with head-quarters at Angora, Yuzgat, Kaiserieh, Beybazar, Nallahan, and Sivri-hissar. The Angora detachment is at present in pursuit of a party of brigands who have committed robberies close to this town and have escaped in the direction of Sivri-hissar.

The sanitary arrangements of this town are of the worst description. In the poorer quarters many of the sewers are left open for months together. Refuse food is thrown into the streets, and much of it removed by the street dogs, but in many places large heaps of filth emit the most offensive odours, and remain a public nuisance until the first heavy fall of rain washes it away. This accumulation of filth within, and the presence of much stagnant water in the plain below the town, cause the malarious intermittent fevers which rage in Angora during the summer and autumn.

The Vali has taken the President of the Municipal Council to task for permitting these evils, and, acting upon a joint Report drawn up by the Municipal Doctor and the Engineer of the vilayet, has given orders for draining a large marsh on the north side of the town. This work is being rapidly carried forward. Much good too has been done this week in cleansing the public streets.

Orders have been given that in future medicine will be distributed to the poor gratis by the Municipal Doctor, and the expenses for the same defrayed by the Municipality.

The construction of the Angora-Ismidt road is now being pushed forward in every direction. Nearly 10,000 workmen have been called out this week. Each workman has to work four days without pay, or give an equivalent of 1 medjidié. As each batch of workmen completes its term it will be replaced by others, and the work continue until the harvest. Last year it was felt to be a great hardship that the men were kept to the roads while the harvest was ripe.

The Vali, however, hopes, by employing very large numbers of men, to have the road in an advanced state of preparation before harvest time, and thus avoid the necessity for this.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 28.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 212. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 27, 1884.*

YOUR Lordship is aware that for some time past a number of Armenians convicted of conspiracy have been imprisoned at Erzeroum. Having been informed by Colonel Everett that by far the greater proportion of these men had been the victims of a few designing schemers, and had incurred no serious culpability, I have been for a long time past endeavouring to obtain their release.

The Grand Vizier received my representations in a very friendly spirit, and by his advice it was arranged that the prisoners should appeal to the Sultan's clemency by petition. Having acquainted the Armenian Patriarch with the favourable disposition of the Porte, a Petition, through his instrumentality, was duly forwarded by the prisoners, and I have now learnt that their appeal has proved partially successful. They have been divided into three categories. Those in the first category are still kept in prison. Those of the second have had two-thirds of the term of their imprisonment remitted, and those in the third category have been granted a free pardon. The numbers of those in the third category amount to thirty-one, but the division of the other two categories has not yet been completed by the Minister of Justice.

During our tedious endeavours to arrive at a favourable result, I have carefully avoided allowing the Embassy to appear to have had any hand in the business. Had we engaged in an ostentatious and open advocacy of these poor people's interests, I have little doubt but that the Sultan would have refused to pardon any of them. The partial success we have obtained must be entirely attributed to the friendly assistance of the Grand Vizier and the Sultan's own humane and amiable instincts, which are very strong, when not perverted by suspicion, fear, or irritation at external interference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 29.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville:—(Received July 16.)

(No. 222.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, July 10, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which has been addressed to me by Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting the levying, for the first time, of a poll tax on the occasion of the taking the census in some of the cazas in that vilayet, and the great discontent to which this measure has given rise.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 29.

Lieutenant-Colonel Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

My Lord, *Erzeroum, June 26, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that a census of all the inhabitants, male and female, is being taken in some of the cazas of this vilayet.

On this occasion, and for the first time, a tax of 1 piastre per head is being levied on the people, and I understand that its collection is causing great discontent both among Mussulmans and Christians. No evasion, however, is allowed. Cases of refusal are summarily dealt with, the dissentients being either beaten or imprisoned until the tax is paid.

Among the Kurds dissatisfaction is very strongly expressed, and I was informed yesterday that the Haideranli tribe, inhabiting the district of Bayazid, threaten to emigrate rather than comply with the demand.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT.
Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan.

No. 30.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 223.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 10, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 212, Confidential, of the 27th June, I have the honour to state that I have received a telegram from Colonel Everett reporting that the thirty-one Armenians belonging to the third category of the political prisoners at Erzeroum were released on the 4th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 31.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 236.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 17, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a despatch from Colonel Everett, describing the anxiety felt by the Christian communities of Van in consequence of the presence in the country of four notorious brigands, who have been recently released from prison by the authorities of the vilayet.

I have thought it my duty to communicate the contents of Colonel Everett's despatch to Assim Pasha, and to point out to his Excellency the serious consequences that are likely to ensue from the ill-advised lenity of the local authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 31.

Colonel Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 30.)
My Lord, *Erzeroum, July 2, 1884.*

I HAVE learnt through Mr. Mihran Bagdassarian that, since the departure of Mr. Eyres, the judicial authorities at Van have released from prison, and have allowed to return to their homes, two notorious Kurdish robbers, viz., Gavli Mehemet Agha, who for many years oppressed the Christians of the district of Shaddakh, and a certain Abdurriza Oglou Mustafa.

Mr. Bagdassarian also states that the renowned brigand Hamzo, who, after having pretty well ruined the districts of Ardjesh and Edjivas, surrendered to the Government and was pardoned, has again appeared in the districts at the head of a large and well-armed band of Persian Kurds, and that another noted robber, Derbaz Agha, who for many years plundered the districts of Khoshab, Alpak, and Nurduz, entirely ruining many Christian villages, and who was placed in confinement at Serai, in the district of Mahmudieh, has been recently released on bail by the Kaimakam, and profiting by the liberty afforded him, has made his escape.

The release of the first two, the appearance of the third, and the escape of the fourth, naturally causes much anxiety to the Christian inhabitants, who have every reason to fear increased annoyance during the remainder of the summer.

I learn from the same source that, on the 5th ultimo, some armed Persian Kurds crossed the frontier at Shemdina, in the Sandjak of Gevver, with the idea of taking possession of some villages which, originally Persian, had been presented by His Majesty the Shah forty years ago to Sheikh Obeydullah. Mehemet Sadyk, the Sheikh's eldest son, on receiving information of this circumstance, ordered his people to drive them out. A fight ensued, in which several Kurds on both sides were wounded. Eventually Turkish troops came up and the Persians retired. Shortly afterwards Mehemet Sadyk was summoned to Gevver and arrested—it is not precisely known on what grounds, but it is believed that information had been received by the Commandant of the troops stationed in the old residence of Sheikh Obeydullah at Neri, to the effect that Mehemet Sadyk was meditating an attack on them.

It was for this reason that a reinforcement of one battalion had been sent to Neri, as mentioned in my despatch of the 10th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT.

No. 32.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 244. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, July 24, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 223 of the 10th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Colonel Everett reporting the release, on the 4th instant, of thirty-one out of the thirty-nine Armenians who were imprisoned during the winter of 1882-83 on a charge of treason.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 32.

Colonel Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 34. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Erzeroum, July 10, 1884.*

I HAVE already informed your Excellency by telegraph of the release on the 4th instant of thirty-one out of the thirty-nine Armenians who were imprisoned during the winter of 1882-83 on a charge of treason.

Although, and wisely, no demonstration of any sort has been made on this occasion, the people are none the less grateful to those who have interested themselves in the welfare of their compatriots, and I have been privately requested by all

those with whom I have conversed on the subject to convey to your Excellency their heartfelt thanks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT.

No. 33.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 240.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, July 24, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which has been addressed to me by Mr. Acting Consul Calvert, stating that the Christian zaptiehs in the northern parts of the Vilayet of Aleppo have been replaced by Mussulmans.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 33.

Acting Consul Calvert to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 40.)
My Lord, *Aleppo, July 8, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to report, as a significant sign of the increasing distrust of the Porte towards the Armenians in the northern parts of this vilayet, that the Christians, almost wholly Armenians, employed as zaptiehs, in the districts of Marash and Zeitoun, have been discharged, and their places filled by Mussulmans drafted from the police force in other parts of the vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND CALVERT.

No. 34.

Earl Granville to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 240.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, August 5, 1884.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 236 of the 17th ultimo, forwarding a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan relative to the anxiety felt by the Christians of Van in consequence of the presence in the country of notorious brigands recently released from prison by the authorities of the vilayet.

Her Majesty's Government approve of your Excellency having communicated the contents of Colonel Everett's despatch to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, and of your having pointed out to his Excellency the serious consequences that are likely to ensue from the action of the local authorities in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 35.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 263.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, August 7, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 253 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Mr. Calvert, Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Aleppo, respecting the state of affairs at Zeitoun.

Mr. Calvert, your Lordship will observe, is expecting further information.

I have, &c.
(For the Earl of Dufferin),
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 35.

Acting Consul Calvert to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 41.)
My Lord, *Aleppo, July 16, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, according to advices received from Armenian sources at Zeitoun, the well-known Babek, after paying the full amount of taxes demanded from him—45 liras—was arbitrarily arrested, but contrived to escape to the mountains, which he now keeps with 200 or 300 followers.

Djemil Pasha, speaking from telegraphic information of later date, says there was a passing and unimportant effervescence in those parts which has been happily overcome by the moral suasion of the Governor of Marash. Three soldiers proceeding from Marash to Zeitoun had been attacked and their arms carried off, one of the number being wounded. Subsequently a force of sixty gendarmes and forty soldiers being sent against a refractory village were opposed by several hundred Armenians, who fired some shots, killing one Turk and wounding another; but the troops (so the Vali affirms) forbore to retaliate. Djemil Pasha showed me the Governor's latest telegram, stating that offenders were daily being persuaded to give themselves up, and that, all being now quiet, he was about to return to his post.

Djemil Pasha attributes the origin of the movement to some of the Armenian hierarchy—he did not specify whom. As to Babek, his Excellency professed not to know who he is.

There has not been time for any Armenian version of the above later events to reach Aleppo, but I am expecting one shortly.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND CALVERT.

No. 36.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received August 13.)

(No. 253.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 28, 1884.*

SOME time since I received intelligence from Mr. Acting Consul Calvert that affairs in Zeitoun were not in a satisfactory condition, and that the policy of the Governor-General had a tendency to superinduce complications. In reply, I told Mr. Calvert to adopt a very cautious attitude so as not to stimulate excitement, to watch the course of events carefully, and to report to me upon them from time to time. At the same time, I made representations at the Porte, earnestly requesting it to impress upon the Vali of Aleppo to abstain from doing anything which might be productive of discontent or disturbance at Zeitoun.

I have now received a telegram from Mr. Calvert, dated the 26th instant, in which he tells me that the Governor-General, just before leaving for Aintab, whither he has gone, had received a strong injunction from the Porte to be very moderate and cautious in his dealings with the Zeitoun question.

Mr. Calvert adds that letters have come from Zeitoun which do not contain any special intelligence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 37.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received August 13.)

(No. 257.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August 1, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, stating that, in consequence of the persecutions to which they are subjected by the Kurds, the Nestorian inhabitants of the district of Shemdina, in the Vilayet of Hakkiari, are emigrating to Russia.

I have thought it my duty to call the serious attention of the Sublime Porte to the fact reported by Colonel Everett.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 37.

Colonel Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 36.)
My Lord, *Erzeroum, July* 16, 1884.

ABOUT four months ago I received information from Mr. Eyres that the Nestorian inhabitants of the district of Shemdina, in the Vilayet of Hakkiari, unable longer to endure the persecutions to which they are subjected by the Kurds, intended to emigrate into Russia. I now learn from Mr. Bagdasarian that the emigration is actually taking place.

Although exact statistics of the Nestorians of Shemdina are wanting, it is known that their numbers are inconsiderable, and that they occupy but twenty villages of the caza.

Major Clayton, our late Vice-Consul for Van, speaking of them, says *:—"As regards the Nestorians of Shemdina, including the Metropolitan, they are practically mere vassals of Sheikh Obeydullah, and can do only what he orders."

The departure of Obeydullah did not improve their condition. No sooner had he left than his eldest son, Mehemet Sadyk, inaugurated an unprecedented system of persecution. In conjunction with three other Kurdish Beys, he succeeded in ousting from the Administrative Council its Christian members. He then set about pillaging the inhabitants. Those who were unable to satisfy his demands were turned out of their houses and deprived of their lands; if they offered resistance they were murdered.

The action of the Government has completed their misfortunes. According to information which Mr. Bagdasarian has received from Bashkaleh, the local authorities of Gevver sent zaptiehs to collect from the Nestorians a large sum of money, representing many years arrears of taxes. The people, on being made acquainted with this demand, sent deputies to Gevver to explain that these taxes had been already paid by them to the late Sheikh Obeydullah. No attention was paid to this representation. On the contrary, orders were given to the zaptiehs to collect the money without delay, and, according to the information which Mr. Bagdasarian received, the orders were carried out in a very barbarous manner.

The following telegram was then sent to the Minister of the Interior:—

"The Turkish authorities are giving to the Kurds the lands, homes, and villages which have belonged for centuries to our fathers.

"We implore your intercession.

(Signed) "The Metropolitan and People of Shemdina."

No attention being given to this telegram, the people resolved on the emigration mentioned above.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT,
Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan.

No. 38.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received August 13.)

(No. 261.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August* 7, 1884.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch which I have received from Lieutenant-Colonel Everett, reporting upon the deplorable condition of the Vilayet of Diarbekir. I have instructed Sir A. Sandison to

* No. 25 of the 10th August, 1880.

bring the substance of Lieutenant-Colonel Everett's despatch to the notice of the Sublime Porte.

I have, &c.
(For the Earl of Dufferin),
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 38.

Colonel Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 37.)
My Lord, *Erzeroum, July* 24, 1884.

IN my despatch No. 35 of the 10th instant I had the honour to bring to the notice of your Excellency the unsatisfactory condition of the Vilayet of Diarbekir.

M. Boyajian now reports a much worse state of things. He says that in every sandjak of the province there are complications, and that cases of murder and the sacking of villages are of daily occurrence.

The Governor appears helpless to meet the growing disorder, and there is some apprehension of a general Kurdish rising.

In the meanwhile, the state of the Christian population is distressing, and every day M. Boyajian is implored to report their condition to your Excellency, in order that some alleviation of their sufferings may be obtained.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT,
Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan.

No. 39.

Earl Granville to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 252.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, August* 20, 1884.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 253 of the 28th ultimo relative to the unsatisfactory condition of affairs at Zeitoun, and I approve the representations made byyour Excellency to the Porte on the subject, as well as the instructions which you sent to Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Aleppo in regard to his attitude in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 40.

Earl Granville to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 255.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, August* 20, 1884.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 261 of the 7th instant, inclosing a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting upon the deplorable condition of the Vilayet of Diarbekir, and I approve of your Excellency's instructions to Sir A. Sandison to bring the substance of Lieutenant-Colonel Everett's despatch to the notice of the Sublime Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 41.

Earl Granville to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 256.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, August* 20, 1884.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 257 of the 1st instant, inclosing a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum stating, that the Nestorians of the district of Shemdina are being driven by persecution to emigrate into Russia, and I approve your having called the serious attention of the Porte to this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 42.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received September 10.)

(No. 290.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August 30, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch which I have received from Lieutenant-Colonel Everett, reporting that the Haideranli Kurds have emigrated to the Persian frontier in consequence of the taking of a census of the inhabitants of the Vilayet of Erzeroum, accompanied by taxation at the rate of 1 piastre per head.

As your Lordship will perceive, they have sent a deputation to His Majesty the Shah requesting territory in Persia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 42.

Lieutenant-Colonel Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 39.)
My Lord, *Erzeroum, August 4, 1884.*

IN my despatch No. 29 of the 26th June, I reported the taking of a census of the inhabitants, accompanied by taxation at the rate of 1 piastre per head. I also mentioned that in consequence the Haideranli Kurds had threatened to emigrate.

I have now received information from M. Bagdasarian that 2,500 families of the above-mentioned tribe have removed from Arjesh, between Bayazid and Van, and, encamping on the Plain of Abagha, in the neighbourhood of the Persian frontier, have sent a deputation to His Majesty the Shah requesting territory in Persia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT,
Consul for Kurdistan.

No. 43.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received September 10.)

(No. 295.)
My Lord, *Therapia, September 3, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 253 of the 28th July last, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Aleppo, reporting that the present state of affairs at Zeitoun is satisfactory, and that it is generally believed that no further complications are to be feared in that district for the present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 43.

Acting Consul Calvert to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 44.)
My Lord, *Aleppo, August 11, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt (on the 8th instant only) of your Excellency's instructions of the 2nd ultimo, relative to affairs at Zeitoun.

The information which I have lately received from the Catholicos (now at Marash), through his Beatitude's Secretary-General here, since my last Report on the subject (No. 41 of the 16th ultimo), serves to confirm the belief that no further complications are to be feared in that quarter for the present. That some unfoward occurrences took place is tacitly admitted by the Secretary and other Armenian informants; and from their marked reticence at the same time it may perhaps safely be inferred that Djemil Pasha's account of what happened is in the main correct, and that the feeling of the Armenian community is that the less said about it the better. I have good reason to

believe that the word has been passed among them to preserve complete silence on the subject.

The most remarkable feature in the present situation is that the Geogorian Armenians attribute the blame of the late misunderstanding to their Catholic brethren hinting that the Armenian Catholic Bishop of Marash had something to do with it. It would appear, moreover, that the Porte shares this view, for the Zeitoumlis lately arrested, to the number of twenty, are, I am assured, almost all Catholics, the most notable among them being one Katsag, who was formerly Babek's chief adherent. At the same time, Babek himself has, as a mark of favour, been named President of the Municipality of Zeitoun.

As regards taxation, the validity of the settlement made by the Special Commissioners in 1879 is fully recognized, and £ T. 1,500 has already been collected on that basis. My informant, the Secretary-General, speaks in high praise of Dédé Pasha, the lately-appointed Mutessarif of Marash, through whose tact and moderation the threatened crisis was averted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND CALVERT.

No. 44.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 348.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October 15, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting that a large caravan proceeding from Van to Constantinople was, on the 12th ultimo, attacked and plundered by a band of Persian Kurds.

As your Lordship will perceive, prompt measures were taken by the Local Government to intercept the brigands while still on Ottoman territory. Owing, however, to the refusal of the Turkish officer in command of the force sent in pursuit to allow his men to fire upon the Kurds, the whole band managed to escaped unmolested into Persian territory.

I have thought it my duty to bring the circumstances of the case to the knowledge of the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs and to call his Excellency's special attention to the conduct of the Turkish officer.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 44.

Colonel Everett to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 46.)
My Lord, *Erzeroum, September 27, 1884.*

I AM informed by M. Bagdasarian that a large caravan numbering eighty souls and proceeding from Van to Constantinople was, on the 12th instant, attacked and plundered at the village of Armis by fifty Persian Djellali Kurdish horsemen.

On intelligence of the robbery reaching Van, Munir Pasha, the Commandant, immediately ordered some cavalry stationed at Arjesh to proceed at once to the village of Pegri near which the Persians would probably recross the frontier, and the Inspector of Police gathering together the whole available force of zaptiehs proceeded in the same direction. These forces succeeded in intercepting the brigands while yet on Ottoman territory and the troops asked permission to fire on them. The officer in command, however, refused on the plea that it was against the law, and thus the whole band were permitted to escape unmolested, carrying with them £ T. 500 and fifty horses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT,
Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 45.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 350.)
My Lord,

Therapia, October 16, 1884.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Barnham, Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Aleppo, reporting that a large portion of the town of Zeitoun has been destroyed by fire, and pointing out the urgent necessity of something being done by the Ottoman Government to relieve the immediate wants of the inhabitants.

On the receipt of the above despatch I at once communicated on the subject with the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs, and begged his Excellency to inform me what steps had been taken to send relief to the sufferers. His Excellency informed me, in reply, that the Minister of the Interior had telegraphed to the local authorities asking for further information as to the extent of the losses and the immediate wants of the population.

His Excellency further stated that the authorities at Zeitoun having asked for a supply of corn for distribution, Edhem Pasha, the Minister of the Interior, has made inquiries as to how much will be required, so that orders may be sent for the necessary supplies to be furnished without delay.

I have duly informed Mr. Barnham of the result of my inquiries.

As your Excellency will perceive, Mr. Barnham's despatch contains some interesting information with regard to the general state of affairs in Zeitoun and the recent complications which took place in that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 45.

Acting Consul Barnham to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 53.)
My Lord;

Aleppo, October 1, 1884.

I REGRET to report that a large portion of the town of Zeitoun was destroyed by fire on Saturday, the 20th ultimo. The American missionaries of Marash estimate the number of houses burnt at 600, whereas the Catholicos of Sis, in his telegram to the Bishop of Aleppo, reports the destruction of 1,000 houses and shops. The total number of houses in Zeitoun being 1,300, it seems certain that more than one-half of the town has been destroyed. As it is possible that this untoward event may lead to a renewal of complications in the Zeitoun district, I beg to describe to your Excellency the actual state of affairs in that town immediately before this event. Situated but one day's journey from the main road between Angora and Aleppo I visited Zeitoun from curiosity, but, not wishing to invite the suspicions of the authorities, I remained only one night, and thus allowed no opportunity for Babek and other kindred spirits to visit me. The events reported by Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert, in his despatch No. 41 of the 16th July last, were related to me by the Protestant preacher in Zeitoun, with whom I stayed, with further details, which may be read with interest. It was after the return of the Mutessarif, Dedr Pasha, to Marash, during the early part of Ramazan, that Djemil Pasha joined him at that place, and, acting in the spirit of instructions received from Constantinople, opened negotiations with Babek, who was in hiding. He invited Babek to meet him at Marash, sending him his written word that he should not be molested further, and, when he came to Marash, the Vali received him with effusion, presented him with a sword, and appointed him President of the Municipality in Zeitoun. He then bespoke his aid in effecting the capture of the outlaws who remained at large on the mountain, and exacted a written promise from Babek that he would deliver these men into the hands of the Government. The latter, however, does not seem to find it an easy task, he allows himself to be intimidated, and has as yet done scarcely anything in the matter. There was supposed to be a band of fifty or sixty outlaws on the mountain when I was at Zeitoun. Three nights before I arrived there some of them came down the mountain and fired shots into the Beledié. As, however, Babek was living at his vineyard at the time, this act may be regarded as a threat or defiance, rather than intended as an attack upon his person. That Babek himself is sincerely desirous of remaining well

with the Government there seems to be no doubt; and I heard him very well spoken of in Zeitoun.

I regret that I have as yet no details of the fire. Shahin Pasha, Commandant of Gendarmerie, who has had a violent quarrel with the Vali, and has joined with the Inspector of Tribunals and Procureur-General in an intrigue to obtain his dismissal, stated to one of the Dragomans of this Consulate that the fire broke out in the house of the Kaimakam, and seems to have put Djemil Pasha forward as the instigator of an act of incendiarism. I do not care, however, to entertain such an idea, regarding it as a rash statement which found expression from the bitter personality of his quarrel with the Vali. Certainly the Government has long had in view the desirability of forcing the Zeitounlous to establish themselves on other ground where they could be more easily controlled. Remembering the evidence of poverty which I saw at Zeitoun, while riding through the town, the news of the fire affected me with a feeling of consternation at the sad outlook for these people. They have few material resources. The working classes are employed in putting out the iron ore from the deposit at Baron Dagh, five hours distant, or in the smelting operations which are carried on at various distances from the town. There is in the town itself a small industry in the manufacture of wool and cotton cloth, nails and horse-shoes, but very insignificant. During the autumn the owners of vineyards earn a little money by the sale of grapes at Gok Sun. They are unquestionably very much in need of help at all times, and although they have paid taxes for the last five years, I think it would be unfair to exact them at present from those who have suffered by the fire. Winter is approaching, and if any steps are to be taken for the shelter of the townspeople they should be prompt and effective. It is but natural to fear that the hardships of the winter will drive many of them to set the law at defiance, and return to acts of brigandage as a means of earning a livelihood.

I have had the honour to forward to your Excellency to-day a telegram worded as follows:—

"Can anything be done for the people burnt out at Zeitoun and Marash?"

I appeal on behalf of Zeitoun in the first instance, and, secondly, for Marash and Hadjin.

The latter town remains in as complete ruin as it appeared immediately after the fire last year. Money was, I understand, sent from Constantinople, but the manner of its distribution does not appear to have been free from reproach, and there is little to show in return for it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 46.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 351.)
My Lord,

Therapia, October 17, 1884.

WITH reference to the Earl of Dufferin's despatch No. 173 of the 21st May last, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a further despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting upon a journey he has made to Ordoo, and on the settlement of the question of the junction of the Kerassond-Karahissar road.

I have approved of Mr. Biliotti's proceedings in this matter, and I venture to submit to your Lordship that it is no doubt owing in a great measure to Mr. Biliotti having earnestly pressed the importance of this work upon the attention of the local authorities that it has been so far brought to a satisfactory termination.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 46.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 30.)
Sir,

Trebizond, October 4, 1884.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 29 of the 13th ultimo, I have the honour to report that on the pressing and repeated invitation of Sirri Pasha, I decided, at the last

moment, to meet him on the road, which has just been completed in the district of Ordoo.

Interesting as would have been a visit on a road which is expected to be the future main channel of communications with Mesopotamia, I would not have ventured to proceed there without previous authorization, had not the moment and the circumstances been most propitious for treating the question of the junction of the Kerassond and Karahissar road, in which British interests are directly concerned.

Having departed on the 20th ultimo, I returned here yesterday.

As reported in my forementioned despatch, I was unable to obtain information as to whether the Valis of Sivas and of Trebizond had received instructions from the Porte with regard to that question.

Sirri Pasha's movements after the inauguration of the Ordoo road were uncertain; Rifaat Pasha was not far from the frontier of that district superintending the construction of the section of the same road in the Vilayet of Sivas, and above all, the season being advanced, no time was to be lost for executing the junction of the Kerassond-Karahissar road, by which the Lidjessy Mine is to be connected to the seashore.

When I met Sirri Pasha, he told me that he had received instructions from the Porte, but that their execution was impossible this year, the limits of the sections to be constructed by each Vali not being well defined, and there being no material time to ask for explanations, and to carry out the work.

I then proceeded to meet the Vali of Sivas, who was believed to be at twelve hours' distance from Sirri Pasha's station near the frontier, but whom I met at only seven hours.

Rifaat Pasha informed me that, though he had no orders from the Porte, he would construct 6½ kilom. out of the 12 kilom. in contestation, leaving 5½ kilom. for Sirri Pasha's share; but that for the present year they would only be opened to a width of 3 metres. He added that the remainder of the road would be finished before the winter on the full breadth of all the roads in his vilayet, that is 6 metres, 4 of which with macadam.

On my again meeting and explaining the intentions of his rival in road-making, Sirri Pasha, though not admitting the possibility of the section of the Karahissar road being practicable this year, promised that he would likewise construct at once the forementioned 5½ kilom. on a width of 3 metres.

In fact, Mr. Chartier, the engineer of Kerassond, who was employed elsewhere, was dispatched to that town in the same steamer in which I returned here, with instructions to carry out, without loss of time, the project, and Sirri Pasha also intends to send the Mutessarif of Trebizond to Kerassond to expedite the levy of the required labourers.

Mr. Chartier reckons that 2,000 men can open 3 metres of available road within ten working days, and that if 4,000 men can be recruited, that section can be completed this year on a width of 6 metres.

In a letter which I have received from Lidjessy on the day of my departure from Ordoo, and of which I beg to inclose a copy, the Manager of the mine expresses the conviction that the Karahissar section will not be practicable this year even for animals. He complains of having been deceived twice by the engineer of the province; states that the Vali of Sivas appears to have been likewise deceived, and calls my attention to the letter on the subject published in the Gazette of this town, of which I have had the honour to forward a translation in my despatch No. 20 of the 13th ultimo.

I communicate to Rifaat Pasha the opinion expressed by the Manager of the Lidjessy Mine with regard to the practicability of the road, and have no doubt that the Vali of Sivas will use his best endeavours to carry out his good intentions, in spite of the shortcomings of his subordinates.

Trusting that you will approve of my having proceeded to Ordoo without previous authorization under the forementioned circumstances, and that you will consider as satisfactory the result obtained, I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 46.

M. Escherich to Consul Biliotti.

Mines près de Lidjessy, le 20 Septembre, 1884.

M. le Consul,

CONFORMÉMENT au contenu de la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'adresser le 30 du mois passé, je vous transmets les informations suivantes:—

1. Jusqu'à présent l'autorité d'ici n'a rien reçu de la part du Ministère des Travaux Publics relativement à la portion de la route entre Kérassonde et Karahissar qui depuis l'année passée est en litige entre les deux Vilayets de Sivas et de Trébizonde. La construction de cette portion de la route reste encore en état de problème.

2. Pour cette année encore la route en question ne saura être mise en circulation même pour les bestiaux.

3. Les progrès pour la construction de cette route pendant l'année courante ne sont pas grands, attendu que ce n'est qu'au mois d'Août, c'est-à-dire après l'arrivée sur les lieux de son Excellence le Vali de Sivas qu'on avait commencé de travailler sérieusement; malheureusement à cause de la moisson, quelques jours après, ayant de congédier pour quinze jours tous les prestataires du district d'Aloudjara, depuis le 10 de ce mois on continue les travaux avec les seuls prestataires du district de Karahissar (les prestataires des districts de Koïlahissar, Hamidé, et Souchcher étant employés à la route d'Ordou), bien renommés pour leur paresse.

4. Vous connaissez combien nous avons dépensé pour cette route, et surtout pendant l'année passée, à la suite de l'assurance qu'on nous avait donnée, par l'ingénieur-en-chef, Mr. Rivet, que la route serait terminée l'automne passé; la même assurance nous a été réitérée cette année encore, mais nous avons le déplaisir de vous dire que nous avons été trompés pour la deuxième fois; voilà les observations que vous désirez savoir dans l'intérêt de notre Compagnie et que je vous donne.

Je saisis, &c.

The Asia Minor Mining Company (Limited),
(Signé) J. W. H. ESCHERICH.

P.S.—Il paraît que le Vali de Sivas a été également trompé comme nous. Certains détails assez intéressants vous trouverez dans le journal de votre ville "Trapeyun," No. 721, que vous devez certes avoir vu jusqu'à présent.

J. W. H. E.

No. 47.

Earl Granville to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 308.) *Foreign Office, October* 30, 1884.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 350 of the 16th instant on the subject of the conflagration at Zeitoun, and I approve the steps taken by you at the Porte with a view to the relief of the sufferers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 48.

Earl Granville to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 309.) *Foreign Office, October* 30, 1884.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 348 of the 15th instant, in which you report the robbery of a caravan proceeding from Van to Constantinople, and the escape of the brigands into Persian territory; and I approve your having brought to the knowledge of the Minister for Foreign Affairs the conduct of the Turkish officer in permitting the escape of the robbers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 49.

Earl Granville to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 311.)

Foreign Office, October 31, 1884.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 351 of the 17th instant, in which you report the settlement of the question of the junction of the Kerassond Kara-Hissar road; and I have to instruct you to convey to Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond my appreciation of his endeavours to obtain the completion of this road.

I am, &c.

(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 50.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received November 5.)

(No. 358.)

(Extract.)

Therapia, October 21, 1884.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 351 of the 17th instant, in which I forwarded to your Lordship a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting the settlement of the question of the junction of the Kerassond and Kara-hissar road, I have the honour to state that the information supplied by Mr. Biliotti has been confirmed by the Minister of Public Works, who has informed me that, in accordance with instructions from the Sublime Porte, orders were recently sent to the Valis of Sivas and Trebizond to complete the junction of the above roads, an equal share of the work to be undertaken by each of the vilayets in question.

No. 51.

Assim Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to Earl Granville by Musurus Pasha, November 17.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 16 *Novembre*, 1884.

REÇU télégramme.

Le Gouvernement Impérial n'a jamais cessé de s'occuper avec la plus grande sollicitude du bien-être de toutes les populations de l'Empire, et ce n'est certes pas au moment où il espère voir ses efforts produire les meilleurs résultats qu'il pouvait s'attendre aux débats qui viennent d'avoir lieu au Parlement.

Étant donné les intentions et les dispositions qui animent la Sublime Porte, il est de l'intérêt général de laisser à elle-même le soin de donner cours à sa généreuse initiative.

Je prie votre Excellence de voir Lord Granville et de lui faire bien comprendre la situation que je viens de décrire, et qui ne comporte ni de nouvelles discussions publiques, ni des instructions à donner à l'Ambassadeur qui sera nommé à Constantinople.

No. 52.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received November 19.)

(No. 388.)

Constantinople, November 12, 1884.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Barnham, Acting Consul at Aleppo, in which he reports that several members of the Anglican community of Aintab have been arbitrarily arrested on an unjust charge of evading payment of the military exemption tax.

I am making unofficial representations on this subject at the Sublime Porte, but I fear that they will not be productive of much result, as Djemil Pasha, the Vali of the Aleppo Vilayet, presuming upon the favour and influence exercised by his father at the

Palace, pays but little attention to the orders sent to him by the central authorities at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Acting Consul Barnham to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 56.)

Aleppo, October 26, 1884.

Sir,

ABOUT a fortnight ago I received a telegram from Muggerditch Effendi, Anglican Bishop of Aintab, reporting that several of his community had been arbitrarily arrested on an unjust charge of evading the payment of the military exemption tax, and requesting me to intercede on their behalf with the Vali.

I at once called upon his Excellency and asked him to order the release of these persons until an inquiry could be made as to the justice of the claim made against them. He replied that the matter rested with the Mutessarif of Aleppo, who would telegraph to the Kaïmakam of Aintab, and promised that the Mutessarif should telegraph to the Kaïmakam that if there were no legal objection to that course, they should be set at liberty. An hour later I sent a dragoman to ascertain what answer had been sent, and found that the Vali, without referring the matter to the Mutessarif, had telegraphed orders that the men "were to be kept in prison until the money was paid." I then wrote to Bishop Muggerditch asking him to send me a report. He says that ten years ago he obtained an order from the Aleppo Government that the taxes of his community should be assessed and collected separately from those of other communities. That they have hitherto paid taxes at the same rate as members of other communities, but that a certain Kara Nazarian, Nighahous of the Armenian Gregorian Church, had presented a list to the Kaïmakam showing a considerable increase of taxes due from these people for the last few years. That, as it was unjust, he had ordered his people not to pay, and they had been imprisoned, and are in prison at the present moment.

Unofficial and friendly intercession on behalf of this small community is useless with such a Governor as Djemil Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 53.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 435.)

Constantinople, November 29, 1884.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, giving a deplorable account of the state of affairs in that vilayet owing to the raids of brigands, the insufficiency of the number of the police, and of the judicial officials.

I have given a Memorandum, setting forth the statements of Mr. Biliotti, to the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs, copy of which is herewith inclosed for your Lordship's information.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 53.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 34.)

Trebizond, November 15, 1884.

Sir,

WITHIN the last seven years I have had the honour to repeatedly report on outrages perpetrated by brigands from the district of Rizeh against the inhabitants of the Armenian borough of Khodoortchoor.

In consequence of the energetic and efficient measures adopted by Rassim Pasha, the present Mutessarif of Lazistan, of the notorious band of the Tuilogloos a few were killed,

some captured, others compelled to cross the Russian frontier, and the remainder to keep out of the way.

It was, therefore, hoped that tranquillity would be enjoyed, and so it has been some time since, so far as the borough itself is concerned.

But it being known that the Khodoortchoorlis returning home carry with them their own earnings, and part of those of their countrymen abroad, all of whom practise the lucrative calling of bakers, besides raids in their villages, their inhabitants are also exposed to danger while travelling.

About a month since, thirteen of these Armenians coming back from Russia were plundered near Hamsheen of their luggage and money exceeding 1,000*l.* by Shahin Aga, son of Hadji Osman Aga, Gobaloglou Hafooz, a certain Ali, and five or six other brigands.

The police force sent after them killed Hafez, apprehended Shahin and Ali, who are in gaol at Rizeh, and recovered part of the stolen property; but it is to be feared that, as in all preceding cases of this description, the culprits will evade full punishment, and the victims will never recover their property.

Notwithstanding repeated demands, the Khodoortchoorlis have not yet succeeded in obtaining the restitution of chalices, silver candlesticks, carpets, &c., stolen from their church six or seven years ago, and which are in the hands of the local authorities.

The police do more than might have been expected from their inefficient condition.

But the same cannot be said with regard to the Courts of Justice. Trials are protracted, and the greatest criminals escape punishment owing to the venality of the Judges.

However, I must say that even were they inclined to dispatch business, the amount of that on their hands is such that it would be difficult for them to do so. In order to convey an idea, I may state that according to the computation of most competent parties the average number of murders in this vilayet amounts to no less than one for every day.

Besides a Public Prosecutor at Trebizond, there is a single Substitute in each of the four sandjaks, who has to proceed and make investigations on the spot; the distances are great, and the evidence difficult to obtain; before he has done with a case, another calls him in another locality, and while he is absent there is no one to act in his stead in the Courts.

The deficiency is especially felt in the Sandjak of Trebizond. There being numberless other criminal cases, besides murders, the Judges cannot go through their business, which accumulates with great rapidity. It seems to have already reached a point where the Courts can hardly discharge their office and the incumbrance is daily increasing. Should no remedial measures, such as auxiliary Substitutes or Courts, be adopted, it may be feared that the Courts will end by coming to a dead-lock.

The appointment of a responsible official for the keeping of the property recovered from brigands and thieves is also greatly required. Now it mostly happens that no traces of it can be found by its owner at the end of a protracted trial. He is sent from Department to Department, and from official to official, until he gets tired and gives up all further claim.

The presence of a responsible official would perhaps tend to expedite business; in all cases there will be more security for the victims to obtain the restitution of that portion of their property which is recovered from the plunderers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 53.

Pro-memorid.

DEPUIS sept ans, le Consul de Sa Majesté Britannique à Trébizonde a constamment signalé les méfaits commis par les brigands dans le district de Hamsheen sur les habitants du bourg Arménien de Kodourtchour.

D'après une dépêche du 15 courant il résulte que par suite des mesures énergiques et efficaces adoptées par Rassim Pacha, Mutessarif de Lazistan, quelques individus formant partie de la bande des Tellioglous furent tués, d'autres arrêtés, d'autres forcés de passer en Russie, et d'autres à se tenir cachés.

Il y avait donc tout lieu d'espérer que la tranquillité de ce bourg ne serait plus troublée et en effet pendant quelque temps les choses ont bien marché. Il paraît cependant que les Kodourtchourlis s'éloignent de chez eux pour suivre le métier de boulanger Les brigands ayant appris qu'ils avaient l'habitude de porter sur eux leurs épargnes en rentrant chez eux ainsi que celles de leurs compatriotes les attaquent aujourd'hui non-seulement dans leurs villages mais aussi durant les voyages qu'ils sont obligés d'entreprendre.

Il y a environ un mois, par exemple, treize Arméniens, natifs de Kodourtchour, qui revenaient de la Russie, ont été dévalisés près de Hamsheen de leur argent (1,000*l.*) par Chahin Agha, fils de Hadji-Osman Agha; Gobologlou Hafooz; un certain Ali et cinq ou six autres brigands.

Les gendarmes envoyés à leur poursuite sont parvenus à tuer Hafooz, à arrêter Chahin et Ali et à recouvrer une partie des objets volés. Il faut espérer que les coupables seront sévèrement punis et que les victimes de ce vol recouvreront leur argent.

Les Kodourtchourlis se plaignent qu'ils ne sont pas encore parvenus à obtenir la remise de la toile, chandeliers, tapis et autres objets qui se trouvent actuellement entre les mains des autorités locales et qui avaient été volés de leurs églises il y a six à sept ans.

On ne saurait se plaindre de la police, qui déploie tous ses efforts en vue de suppléer à son insuffisance numérique. Mais le fonctionnement de la justice dans le vilayet et surtout à Trébizonde laisse beaucoup à désirer.

D'après les renseignements parvenus à cette Ambassade il se commet en moyenne un meurtre par jour dans le Vilayet de Trébizonde. Devant un tel état de choses, il devient absolument nécessaire d'augmenter le nombre des gendarmes ainsi que le personnel judiciaire, qui se trouve beaucoup trop restreint, et ne suffit pas pour pouvoir faire face convenablement aux besoins d'un service aussi important.

Le 29 November 1884.

No. 54.

Earl Granville to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 353.) *Foreign Office, December 4, 1884.*

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 388 of the 12th ultimo, reporting the efforts you are making at the Porte on behalf of certain members of the Anglican community at Aintab, imprisoned on the charge of evading the payment of a tax, I have to instruct you to continue, if necessary, to press the Turkish Government to send orders for their release pending an inquiry as to the justice of the charge brought against them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 55.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 412.) *Constantinople, December 2, 1884.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 390 of the 14th instant and to previous correspondence, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Biliotti reporting that the section of the junction of the Kerassond and Karahissar road, assigned to the Vali of Trebizond, has been completed.

Mr. Biliotti adds that the Sivas authorities are also doing all in their power to push on the works necessary for the completion of the remaining section.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 55.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 35.) *Trebizond, November 17, 1884.*

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 30 of the 4th ultimo, I have the honour to acquaint you that the junction section of the Kerassond-Karahissar road, assigned to Sirri Pasha for construction, was completed last week.

It consists of 3¾ miles; of about 1,000 square yards of sustaining walls; of seven small bridges, whose piers are built without mortar; and has all over a width of 20 feet covered with macadam; 5,000 labourers worked during fifteen days.

These details were given to me by the Mutessarif of Trebizond, who superintended the work, and I have no reason to doubt of their accuracy.

Great credit is especially due to M. Chartier, the engineer at Kerassond, for the completion of the road. I avail myself of the opportunity to point out that M. Chartier, who, according to Sirri Pasha's opinion (which I fully share), is the ablest engineer in this vilayet, has always performed his duties to the entire satisfaction of his superiors, but has hitherto obtained no promotion in rank or salary.

With regard to the junction section to be constructed by the district of Karahissar, I heard a month since from the Lidjessy mine that the blasting of rocks, which was carried on by contract, was actively pursued; that the Mutessarif was on the road; and that the Colonel of gendarmerie was collecting labourers.

Rifaat Pasha informs me in a private letter, dated the 29th ultimo, that the Karahissar road was completed up to the contested spot, and that the remaining 4 miles in his section, which are constructed for the present on a width of only 3 metres, will be finished before long. He adds that he continually sends telegraphic orders to the Mutessarif to expedite the work, which, when completed, will render available the whole line for beasts of burden.

I understand that Rifaat Pasha has kept his word with regard to the completion before the end of October last of his section on the Ordou-Sivas road, and that a few waggons have lately come from Sivas to Ordou without the least difficulty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 56.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 460.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 11, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 435 of the 29th ultimo, in which I forwarded to your Lordship copy of a Memorandum which I lately presented to the Porte on the deplorable condition of the Vilayet of Trebizond, as reported in M. Biliotti's despatch No. 33 of the 6th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose herewith copies of further despatches from that gentleman. M. Biliotti states that Sirri Pasha has been promoted to the Vilayet of Angora, and that Aziz Pasha, Vali of that province, is to go to Trebizond. I believe that Aziz Pasha is an able, energetic, and honest Governor, and I am inclined, subject to your Lordship's approval, to await the result of the change before making any further observations to the Porte.

I have informed M. Biliotti of my intention in this matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 56.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

Sir, *Trebizond, November 29, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 6th instant, I have the honour to inform you that, while the Porte was expressing to Sirri Pasha its full confidence in him, the Minister of Public Works, considering superfluous an inspection of the Ordoo road, was conveying to him his approval for its construction.

However, Tsuruksooli Ali Pasha, vexed at the little effect of his slanders, has lately been threatening with his ire those of the inhabitants of Ordoo who did not side with him.

The latter, besides addressing Petitions to the Vali of Trebizond, having also forwarded pressing telegrams to Constantinople, representing that a breach of the public peace was to be apprehended, the Porte wired this week to Sirri Pasha to adopt, without the least delay, the necessary measures to secure public tranquillity.

In consequence of this order, an Extraordinary Council having been held, it was decided to forthwith dispatch to Ordoo the substitute Public Prosecutor, accompanied

by the Colonel of Gendarmerie of the vilayet, in order to make an inquest, and to carry out any immediate measure that might be required by the nature of the case.

These two officers embarked yesterday, but before the steamer's departure, a telegram having been received from the Minister of Justice prohibiting all judicial officers to proceed to Ordoo and make an inquiry against Ali Pasha, the substitute Public Prosecutor relanded, and the Colonel of Gendarmerie proceeded alone to his destination.

No comments are required on so singular a step on the part of the Minister of Justice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 56.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

Sir, *Trebizond, December 2, 1884.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 29th ultimo, I have the honour to report that Sirri Pasha has received yesterday a telegram from the Porte informing him that he is appointed Vali at Angora.

There is only one opinion as to the change being due to the influence of Tsuruksooli Ali Pasha's protector at Constantinople.

Angora being a vilayet of the second class, while Trebizond is only of the third, the transfer is a promotion for Sirri Pasha, proving that the Porte, though not finding fault with his conduct, has had to yield to a pressure of some sort.

This is the second time that Sirri Pasha is recalled from Trebizond in consequence of disagreements between him and Ali Pasha; but the victory of the latter appears to be rather over the Government than over the functionary who is sent to occupy a higher post. Such, at all events, is the impression produced on the population.

The expediency of recalling at once a Vali in order to please a turbulent race may be contested on this occasion, as it was on the preceding one. This hasty step can only be ascribed to the seemingly predominating object of the Porte to prevent the rumour of disorders from spreading abroad, whatever baneful consequences their existence may have for the population at large.

It is rumoured that Aziz Pasha, the Governor-General of Angora, is to be appointed Vali of Trebizond; he is stated to be a very able functionary; but whoever is appointed to this post will find himself in a dilemma. If he finds fault with the Lazes, he is likely to involve himself into trouble; if, as did Yussuf Pasha, who superseded Sirri Pasha in 1882, he keeps silence, and allows things to follow their course, he is sure to arrive at the same result.

At first, Yussuf Pasha did nothing to oppose the Lazes, and later on he was compelled to send soldiers to protect the natives, but was powerless to attain his object.

It was only under Sirri Pasha's second tenure of office that Laz brigandage was extirpated from this province.

There can be little doubt that, after this second victory, Ali Pasha will consider himself more powerful than ever in this district; and the circumstance mentioned in the latter part of my despatch proves that he is above judicial action, the present Minister of Justice being his countryman and protector.

Under these circumstances, it is easy to foretell the fate awaiting the inhabitants of Ordoo and surrounding districts; they will be oppressed and trampled under foot by the Lazes; there will be no security of property or life for the natives; and the Porte will be unable to contend against the authority bestowed on Ali Pasha by recalling the Vali whenever he does not act according to his wishes.

An attenuation to the evil to which are exposed the natives, and to the power assumed by the Laz element, might be found in also recalling Tsuruksooli Ali Pasha from Ordoo.

I beg leave to refer you to my confidential despatch of the 10th May, 1883, with regard to Ali Pasha's views in this district, and to the probable consequences of his being allowed a free action.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 57.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 480. Confidential.)

Constantinople, December 19, 1884.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship copies of correspondence which has taken place between Her Majesty's Consulate at Aleppo and Her Majesty's Embassy respecting the destruction of some property belonging to Mr. Dermarcarian, Dragoman to Her Majesty's Consulate, and which property is situated at a short distance from the town of Aleppo. Your Lordship will observe that Mr. Dermarcarian has strong suspicion that the Vali, Djemil Pasha, is the instigator of the acts of violence which are recorded in his Petition, and that on being informed that the Vali was hostile to him, he desisted from taking legal proceedings against the persons who had attacked his property. When Mr. Henderson was at Constantinople in the autumn, I asked him how it was that these acts of violence which had occurred in May last were only brought to the knowledge of Her Majesty's Embassy in a despatch written in September, and which had not reached me before the 14th October, and I pointed out to him that it was difficult for me to bring any direct charge against Djemil Pasha, as Mr. Dermarcarian could not prove apparently that he really was the instigator of the acts of violence complained of, and that he should have brought the case before the Tribunal competent to deal with cases affecting real property, and that if I did make representations to the Porte I was sure to be met with that answer.

Mr. Henderson replied that Mr. Dermarcarian had been trying to settle the matter in a friendly way with the Vali, but having failed he had, it would seem, decided upon petitioning through Mr. Calvert for assistance. I desired Mr. Henderson, who was on his way back to his post, to make further inquiries into the matter and report to me.

On the 16th November I received a telegram from Mr. Henderson stating that since the date of Mr. Calvert's despatch No. 49 the crops and farm stock had been pillaged, that a rabble of the Vali's men were engaged in razing the house and buildings to the ground, that the position of affairs at Aleppo was terrible, in short, he might say that the vilayet was in a state of siege. He requested that Mr. Barnham might remain with him for a few months, and said that he proposed sending him to the farms to report. To this I replied that I approved of his sending Mr. Barnham to make inquiries on the spot, but that I could not authorize his remaining at Aleppo so long without your Lordship's sanction. I at the same time made a strong representation on this subject and on the state of the vilayet, as reported by Mr. Henderson, to Assim Pasha, who stated confidentially that some of his colleagues had already endeavoured to obtain the dismissal of this Vali, but had failed.

The reason, my Lord, of this failure is that Djemil Pasha is so strongly supported at the Palace by Namyk Pasha, his father, that he completely sets the Porte at defiance. Finding that my representations to Assim Pasha were of no avail, I addressed myself, through Mr. Marinich, to the Minister of Justice, before whom he laid the case, and left, by my directions, a Memorandum upon it, a copy of which is herewith inclosed. Mr. Marinich reported to me that Hassan Fehmi Pasha promised to give the matter his most serious attention, and he, Mr. Marinich, at the same time informed me that he had learnt that there were numerous complaints against Djemil Pasha, but that they were being kept from the Sultan's knowledge.

On the 1st December I received a further telegram from Mr. Henderson stating that Mr. Barnham had visited the farm in question, and had found the state of affairs there still worse than had been already reported to me. I accordingly made fresh representations to Assim Pasha on the subject, who stated confidentially, in reply, that he was but too well acquainted with the situation at Aleppo and with the particulars of Djemil Pasha's administration, but that it was useless to expect any change for the better so long as his father, Namyk Pasha, continued to retain his influential position at the Palace. His Excellency, at the same time, confirmed a report which Mr. Henderson had brought to my knowledge, viz., that the Procureur-Général of the vilayet had been ordered to Constantinople, and he suggested that Mr. Dermarcarian should petition the judicial authorities of Aleppo on the subject of his complaint, and address the Central Government in case the Tribunals showed any disposition to evade doing their duty.

On the 15th instant I received a despatch from Mr. Henderson inclosing Mr. Barnham's Report, copies of which are herewith inclosed, and on the same day

I again spoke to Assim Pasha on the deplorable state of affairs. His Excellency replied that the Minister of Justice had sent orders to the judicial authorities "to do their duty." I also sent Mr. Henderson's despatch, and its inclosure, to Mr. Consul-General and Judge Fawcett, and requested him to give me his opinion as to the course Mr. Dermarcarian should pursue under the circumstances.

I have the honour to inclose copies of my despatch, and of his reply, of a telegraphic despatch I addressed to Mr. Henderson in consequence, of a despatch to him inclosing Mr. Fawcett's opinion, of a telegram I received from him in reply to my telegram, and of my answer.

A perusal of these documents will place your Lordship in possession of the facts of this case. As it is a matter which concerns real property, it is difficult for Her Majesty's Embassy to interfere more than I have already done. Mr. Dermarcarian's remedy is before the Tribunals, and I think it is much to be regretted that he did not persist in seeking that remedy when injury was first done to his property in the month of May last.

Your Lordship will observe that the Porte is quite powerless to deal with Djemil Pasha so long as he is supported by the Sultan, and that under such circumstances representations, on the part of a foreign Representative, must prove almost abortive until the Porte can reassert its authority.

For obvious reasons I venture to request your Lordship to consider certain portions of this despatch, and its inclosures, as confidential.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 57.

Acting Consul Calvert to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 49.)

Aleppo, September 20, 1884.

My Lord,

I REGRET to have to bring to your Excellency's notice the outrageous facts reported in the inclosed Petition from Mr. Dermarcarian, Dragoman to this Consulate, whereby he and his brothers, together with their families, have been brought to utter ruin. It was only within a day or two of the date of this Petition that I knew anything of the circumstances in question, which, it will be seen, occurred at ten hours' distance from this town. Mr. Dermarcarian, it seems, hoped against hope till the last that it would be possible to conciliate Djemil Pasha, whom he has but too good reason to believe is the instigator of these acts of spoilation, and so to induce His Excellency to stay the work of destruction which has been carried on from week to week.

That Mr. Dermarcarian should have considered such a course as the safest to pursue forcibly shows how necessary were the privileges of foreign protection accorded by the Capitulations to Consular Dragomans at a time when every provincial Governor exercised the despotic power which is to-day enjoyed by the Vali of Aleppo alone. It is obviously unfair that such a strain should be put on the fidelity of a dragoman as that he should dread the power of the Turkish authorities to injure him, more than he could trust the power of the Government he serves to protect him from injury. And I can with truth declare that in the course of my long experience of Turkish provincial administration, I have never known a Governor so powerful, so unscrupulous, and so feared as Djemil Pasha.

However difficult and undesirable may be the task of calling to account an administrator of this stamp, it is difficult to see how it can now be avoided without inviting further outrages. It is not as a mere surmise that I venture here to express the conviction that unless that course is taken Her Majesty's Consulate will be put before long to yet more open contempt.

As regards Mr. Dermarcarian and his near relatives and fellow victims, the latter, as well as himself, will perhaps be deemed not less well entitled to the efficacious protection of the British Government than were the Zeitoumlis under circumstances of not more flagrant wrong.

Mr. Dermarcarian is quite broken down, looking upon his ruin as irretrievable. He is resolved to leave this part of the country, and, although somewhat advanced in years, to seek to repair his fortunes elsewhere. His chief anxiety meanwhile is on the score of bodily harm to his relatives, if not to himself, which he apprehends may

follow the step he has taken in laying before me, for your Excellency's information, the whole facts of his case. Although, with the view of leaving your Excellency free to make such use of their contents as you may deem proper (Mr. Dermarcarian's Petition and the present despatch are not marked "Confidential"), it is, I feel sure, quite needless to beg your Excellency to do so with all the discretion which the circumstances call for.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND CALVERT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 57.

Mr. Dermarcarian to Acting Consul Calvert.

M. le Consul, *Alep, le 15 Septembre*, 1884.

J'AI l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance que depuis quelque temps et aujourd'hui plus que jamais, la ruine et la destruction sont dirigées contre moi et mes frères, et contre mes propriétés et mes biens de la part de son Excellence Djémil Pacha, Gouverneur-Général du Vilayet d'Alep, sans que j'ai donné aucun motif pour tout cela. Entre les malheurs dont je suis victime je prends la liberté de vous noter les suivants, à savoir :—

1. Mon moulin à Kaïdashe, situé à dix heures d'Alep, bâti en pierre et qui m'a coûté plus de 1,000 livres a été, pendant la nuit, détruit et réduit en ruine par des gens armés, lesquels détournèrent l'eau de mon susdit moulin pendant la nuit du 20 Mai dernier. En faisant des recherches nous avons trouvé les poteaux et autres matériaux dans la maison de Abo Agha et dans celle de Mahlé Agha, Moukhtar du village nommé Kamnoun.

2. Pendant la nuit du 25 Août dernier des voleurs armés sont entres dans ma maison. Le lendemain, en prenant des informations, j'ai trouvé que le gardien du quartier faisait partie des voleurs.

3. Dernièrement, pendant la moisson des champs de mon chiflek, mon frère a été pris et emprisonné à Kilez sans aucune cause. Le prêtre Arménien de cette ville protesta contre l'autorité locale pour cet acte d'injustice. Après cela nous avons appris que Djémil Pacha avait écrit une lettre à Ramez Effendi, son commis, et qui est en même temps employé dans la Direction de la Dîme à Kilez, lui mandant de mettre mon frère en prison afin de l'humilier et de lui faire perdre le respect que ses paysans ont pour lui.

4. Un de mes paysans, nommé Cheikh Kalil, qui est dans mon chiflek et entre les mains duquel j'ai confié mes biens, vient d'expulser mes paysans et mes gardiens de mon chiflek, prétendant sommairement que mes biens lui appartiennent, et il s'est emparé de mes animaux et de tout ce que je possède dans le chiflek. En cherchant la cause de cette révolte nous avons trouvé qu'elle a été provoquée par Ali Khéro, commis de Djémil Pacha.

5. Un de mes paysans, le nommé Hassan Ribbo, est à intenter contre nous un faux procès, prétendant que son père possédait un terrain dans notre chiflek. Les membres du Tribunal de Première Instance, Amine Effendi Bayazid et Georgi Effendi Agekbashe, me firent comprendre confidentiellement que cela a été provoquée par Djémil Pacha : "vendez-lui votre chiflek ou bien contentez-le," me dirent-ils "car, nous autres, nous ne pouvons pas agir contre ses ordres."

6. Le commis de Djémil Pacha, Ali Khéro, et l'officier de gendarmerie, Moustaffa Effendi, toutes les fois qu'ils passent par notre chiflek, disent à nos paysans : "n'est-ce pas dommage que ce chiflek appartienne à un giaour ?" Tout cela pour faire révolter nos paysans contre nous, car voilà que depuis deux jours quatre ou cinq de nos paysans se révoltèrent contre nous et s'emparèrent de nos céréales, de nos animaux, et renièrent nos créances chez eux. Tout cela a été secrètement dirigé par Ahmed Bey, un des employés de Djémil Pacha.

Au commencement j'ai eu recours à l'autorité judiciaire, ce que j'ai cessé de faire aussitôt que j'ai appris que Djémil Pacha est contre moi. Dès lors j'ai fait tout mon possible pour désarmer son hostilité.

Ayant secrètement fait part de cet état de choses à l'Inspecteur-Général des Tribunaux, celui-ci me répondit : "Prenez bien garde ; si vous vous plaignez de ce qui vous arrive, Djémil Pacha, par des intrigues, est capable de vous faire injustement mettre en accusation pour quelques prétendus faits criminels, politiques, et autres, afin

de vous ruiner ainsi que toute votre famille, car il jouit d'une telle influence que personne n'ose lui faire la moindre opposition ; par contre, il se trouverait beaucoup de personnes qui, afin de lui plaire, se mettraient volontiers à son service pour vous faire du tort."

Étant ainsi ruiné, je viens, par la présente, vous faire part, M. le Consul, de tous les actes d'un arbitraire inouï dirigés contre moi par son Excellence Djémil Pacha. Il est clairement à prévoir que celui-ci s'emparera plus tard de notre chiflek, qui nous a coûté, à moi et à mes frères, plus de 5,000 livres, et fournit le seul moyen de subsistance à nos familles, qui se composent de quarante membres.

Tout cela, M. le Consul, a pris naissance depuis que, par ordre de Mr. Henderson, j'ai fait des démarches auprès de l'autorité locale à propos de l'affaire des zaptiés qui entrèrent illégalement dans le Consulat de Sa Majesté Britannique.

Me trouvant sous la protection du Consulat, je vous prie de vouloir bien m'indiquer de quelle manière je pourrai sauvegarder mes intérêts, car sans votre appui je serai complètement ruiné.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) N. DERMARCARIAN.
Drogman du Consulat de Sa Majesté Britannique.

Inclosure 3 in No. 57.

Résumé d'une Requête adressée par Mr. Dermarcarian, Drogman du Consulat de Sa Majesté Britannique à Alep, en date du 15 Septembre, 1884.

(Confidentiel.)

MON moulin de Kaïdashe, situé à dix heures d'Alep, bâti en pierre et qui m'a coûté plus de 1,000 livres, a été pendant la nuit détruit de fond en comble par des gens armés qui en détournèrent l'eau. En faisant des recherches nous avons découvert des poteaux et autres matériaux du moulin dans la maison de Abo Agha et dans celle de Mahlé Agha, Moukhtar du village de Kamnoun.

Le 25 Août dernier, durant la nuit, les gens armés sont entrés dans ma maison. Le lendemain j'ai appris que le gardien du quartier faisait partie de cette bande de voleurs. Dernièrement pendant la moisson des champs de mon chiflik, mon frère a été emprisonné à Kiliz arbitrairement.

J'ai appris par suite que Djémil Pacha avait écris une lettre à Kamiz Effendi, son Kyatib, qui est en même temps employé dans la Direction de la Dîme à Kilez, lui donnant l'ordre de mettre mon frère en prison afin de l'humilier.

Un de mes paysans, le nommé Cheik Halil, qui est dans mon chiflik, et entre les mains duquel j'ai confié mes biens, vient d'expulser mes paysans et les gardiens de mon chiflik, en prétendant que ma propriété lui appartient. Le Cheik Halil s'est emparé de mes animaux et de tout ce que je possède dans le chiflik. En cherchant la cause de cet acte arbitraire j'appris qu'il a été provoqué par Ali Khéro, commis de Djémil Pacha.

Un de mes paysans, le nommé Hassan Ribbo, a intenté un faux procès contre nous, alléguant que son père possédait un terrain dans notre chiflik. On m'a fait comprendre secrètement que cela était provoqué par Djémil Pacha. Les magistrats, à la justice desquels j'ai fait appel et qui sont désireux de m'aider, m'ont conseillé de rendre mon chiflik au Pacha, car ils avouent qu'ils sont impuissants d'agir contre les ordres de son Excellence le Vali.

Depuis deux jours quatre ou cinq de nos paysans se sont révoltés contre nous et se sont emparés de nos céréales, de nos animaux, et ont renié leurs dettes. Tout cela a été secrètement dirigé par Achmet Bey, un des employés de Djémil Pacha,

Au commencement j'ai eu recours à l'autorité judiciaire, ce que j'ai cessé de faire aussitôt que j'ai appris que Djémil Pacha est contre moi.

Ayant secrètement fait part de cet état de choses à l'Inspecteur des Tribunaux, celui-ci m'a conseillé de ne pas me plaindre de Djémil Pacha, pour plusieurs raisons.

Inclosure 4 in No. 57.

Consul Henderson to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 57.)

Aleppo, November 30, 1884.

Sir,

WITH reference to Mr. Calvert's despatch No. 4 of the 20th September, I had the honour to inform you by telegram that further outrages had been perpetrated on Dermarcarian's property. That the house and farm buildings were being razed to the ground, and the crops and farm stock destroyed, and I asked your authority to send Mr. Vice-Consul Barnham to the spot to report on the matter.

Mr. Barnham has now returned after making an exhaustive inquiry, and I have the honour to herewith inclose his Report.

The Report speaks for itself, it requires no comment from me, and I would only supplement it by stating that Dermarcarian did not fail when these outrages began to commence legal proceedings, which were arrested by the Vali's influence.

He then appealed to the Procureur-Général who refused to take cognisance of the matter, and he was clearly given to understand that this refusal was solely due to Djemil Pasha's connection with the affair. The declaration thus elicited from the Turkish authorities that justice is dispensed in accordance with the capricious and vindictive will of a rapacious Governor-General, circumscribes Dermarcarian's affair within narrow limits, and as a last resort he now very naturally makes an appeal for the protection and support to which he is justly and legally entitled at our hands.

Mr. Calvert, who has more than forty years' experience in Turkey states in his Report: "I can with truth declare that in the course of my long experience in Turkish provincial administration, I have never known a Governor so powerful, so unscrupulous, and so feared as Djemil Pasha." I have been fifteen years in Turkey, and it has never been my lot to bring a more distressing case under the notice of Her Majesty's Embassy for reparation. The correspondence in this case reveals a state of things rarely exceeded by politic tyranny or fanatical persecution, and which I am persuaded that Lord Granville and even your Excellency, accustomed as you are to receive reports of Turkish misrule and oppression, must read with surprise and indignation.

The farm in question has been the property of Dermarcarian for twelve years; he has expended his all (some 5,000*l.*) in improving it; his brothers and their families have devoted themselves to its cultivation and indurated to all the vicissitudes, hardships, and dangers which wait on such a life in a barbarous country where their hands are never raised to their mouths but with a scanty portion of the produce of an unfruitful soil, they see in a few weeks their homes invaded and ruined, their families insulted, one brother thrown into prison, the labour of years destroyed, and their property laid in waste and desolation by the rapacity of an arbitrary and unscrupulous satrap, whose harmful eyes coveted with irresistible cupidity, the quiet and peaceful homes these poor people had created for themselves.

Dermarcarian assures me that he has abundant evidence to prove that the work of destruction was carried out by Djemil Pasha's express orders, and he is eager to have the opportunity, before any independent and impartial Tribunal, to substantiate the charge he advisedly makes against the Governor-General.

He awaits your Excellency's instructions in the matter, and, as every day's delay aggravates the situation, I would respectfully request your Excellency to be good enough to communicate your decision to the Consulate by telegram.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. HENDERSON.

Inclosure 5 in No. 57.

Vice-Consul Barnham to Consul Henderson.

Aleppo, November 29, 1884.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to furnish you with a detailed Report of my visit to the property of Mr. Dermarcarian, Dragoman of the Aleppo Consulate, with a view to test the truth of the statements contained in Mr. Dermarcarian's Petition of the 13th September last, and to ascertain what evidence is forthcoming to prove that the destruction of his property has been caused by the Governor, Djemil Pasha.

The property of Mr. Dermarcarian consists of 4,800 dunums of rich arable land situated six hours' journey north-west of Aleppo. It includes two villages, one

of which, named Tatmarash, consists of seventeen houses inhabited by fellaheen, who, according to the custom of the country, are partners of the owner of the land, who supplies his tenants with dwellings, seed, animals, and farming implements, receiving in return one-half of the produce of the soil.

Another village, named Al Kamainé, half-an-hour distant from Tatmarash, consists of six or seven houses, inhabited by Arabs. The destruction of property has occurred in and near the village of Tatmarash.

In approaching Tatmarash I followed the eastern boundary of Mr. Dermarcarian's land, and in the villages along that route, or from chance passers by, I heard much which bore upon the object of my journey. I found some unwilling to give me evidence in the matter; much of it, indeed, was tendered most eagerly.

At the village of Kefraltoun the village Sheikh, one Vehal-Iba-Jiza, told me that the plunder of Mr. Dermarcarian's grain and cattle, and the destruction of his houses, was notorious in the district, and that the general idea of the people was that it was caused by Djemil Pasha, because the events were so outrageous that they could only have been caused by or with the sanction of some authority too powerful to incur punishment by law. Euzzro, of the same village, made a similar statement.

A woman named Sultan, wife of Bin-Bashi Hassan Agha, of the same village, then stated that Hassan Talib Sheikh Halil, Boran and Hassan Bibo, of Tatmarash, had pulled up Dermarcarian's fruit trees while she was standing by; that she had remonstrated with them for so doing, saying, "Even had you bought the trees with your own money, it would be a sin." To which they replied, "Don't interfere, we do this by Djemil Pasha's orders. Tatmarash has been given to him."

Ten minutes' ride brought me to Dermarcarian's garden, if, at least, it may now so be called. It is a plot of land 120 dunums in extent, for the most part submerged by the course of the village stream having been diverted into it. A few horses and cows (Dermarcarian's own property) were grazing on the scanty shrubs and grass, while stumps of trees, felled by the hatchet, showed clearly that the garden had even recently been well stocked with fruit trees. These were apple, cherry, and mulberry, while the poplar trees, which once formed a boundary on all sides of the garden, had now disappeared, nothing remaining but the stumps to prove their former existence. At one end of the garden stands a water-wheel, broken and filled with stones. From the garden we rode into Tatmarash. Here I found some houses, among which was Dermarcarian's dwelling house completely wrecked, the roofs having been broken in and the rafters removed, while the walls had in many cases fallen. In walking over the village later on, I found in one house a large number of these same rafters. Among the ruins of Dermarcarian's dwelling house I found a division of the premises filled with straw, soddened by the rain.

Mr. Dermarcarian has two store-houses in the village, one filled with wheat and millet, the other with wheat and sesame. The latter was in the month of June arbitrarily closed and sealed by the Government on the ground that Marcos Dermarcarian had not paid certain taxes due to the Government. This debt he denies, and I afterwards heard his denial confirmed from various sources. I found the store-house in question locked, but the seal removed, by whom I could not ascertain. We climbed on to the roof, which I found to have been broken in two places, one breach being 5 feet long by 2 feet wide. The result is that the grain below has been utterly ruined, being for the most part in a state of putrefaction. Elvash Ibu Melaik, the villager who conducted me to this spot, is one of the few tenants who have remained more or less faithful to the Dermarcarians. I asked him who had broken in the roof. He said that it was done by Sheikh Halil and Boran, of the same village. I asked him why they had done so. He replied that every one knew that it was done by Djemil Pasha's order.

I went with Elvash to his house, where we talked with closed doors. He told me that the men employed in the destruction of Dermarcarian's land were the following persons, all inhabitants of the village of Tatmarash:—Sheikh Halil, Boran, Hadji, Hassan, Mohammed El Mansons, Hassan Zalib, Hassein Towil, Ali, and Hussein Tooma. They had destroyed the farm buildings, pulled up the trees and shrubs in the garden, and ruined his vineyard. On referring to Dermarcarian's Petition, it will be seen that the immediate agents of Djemil Pasha in pursuing this work of destruction are Ali Kherio, his steward; Selim Agha and Sheikh Issa, all resident in the neighbourhood. In confirmation of this Elvas-ibm Melaik told me that Ali Kherio owned a farm close by, which he was in the habit of visiting for a month at a time, and that whenever he came to the farm from Aleppo he always sent for the villagers in question and gave them instructions how to act. The destruction of property is a

common topic of conversation among these men, who openly assert that they have Djemil Pasha's authority for carrying it out.

This statement was confirmed by Ahmed, son of Elvas-ibm-Melaik, and by Ahmed Hadid, of the village of Tireb.

There now remained for me to visit Dermarcarian's vineyard. The road from Tatmarash to Killis follows the vineyard for a short distance, and I found painful evidence of the most wanton destruction in that portion of the vineyard which is cultivated for Mr. Dermarcarian's use. Whereas the remaining half, which belongs to the villagers, was in excellent condition. The vines forming Dermarcarian's share had been pulled up by the roots, except where in rare instances the operation had been imperfectly performed and the plant had shot up again.

I now visited Alkamic. I found that several of the villagers had just arrived from Killis where they had been imprisoned on a charge of attacking the village of Tatmarash, but released on bail. The following translation of a deposition which I obtained at Alkamic will be read with interest, giving the cause of their imprisonment and their own evidence as to Djemil Pasha's proceedings. I took down the deposition in Turkish. I presume it will be sufficient to send a translation to Constantinople, retaining the original here for the present.

(Translation.)

"The Undersigned hereby testify that Dermarcarian's partners, Mohammed El-Talib, his brother Mustafa, and Sheikh Hassan, plundered his grain, seized his land, pulled up his trees, and pulled down his houses, and that they saw them doing so. That they did so by order of Ali Kheiro, Selim Agha, and Sheikh Issa, acting under instructions from the Vali, Djemil Pasha. That Ali Kheiro sent for us, too, and ordered us not to let those Christians cultivate the land, and threatened us that if we did not obey, Djemil Pasha would send us into exile and ruin us. Ali Kheiro gave us a good deal of advice, to the effect that we were not to cultivate the Dermarcarian's land for them, but deny their right of ownership entirely.

"We answered that should Djemil Pasha buy the land we will then be his servants, but that we testify in the name of God that everything, the land, houses, crops, and animals, are the lawful property of the Dermarcarians. A thing hitherto unseen, unheard of, has happened. The people of Tatmarash have plundered Dermarcarian's property, saying that Djemil Pasha has taken the land. Because we would not act with them the villagers of Tatmarash lodged a complaint against us with the Government of Killis, falsely accusing us of having attacked their village. We were taken to Killis, where we told the truth of the matter, denying the charge, but were afraid to state to the Medjliss that the people of Tatmarash had acted against us at the instigation of Djemil Pasha. One of the members of the Medjliss at Killis, Bairam Zadé, said to us, 'God help you; Djemil Pasha's finger is in this business.'

(Signed) "Juma Mukktar, his × mark.
"Sheikho-ibn-Hussein, *ditto*.
"Khalk-ul-Djassian, *ditto*.
"Hussein-ul-Rimiss, *ditto*."

I have little to add. During my two days' stay in Killis, I received between forty and fifty visits from persons who gave me ample confirmation of Djemil Pasha's complete control over the Kaïmakam of Killis, and who spoke with consternation of Dermarcarian's misfortunes, expressing their fears that the Government intended by degrees to oust all Christian proprietors from their holdings. Among those visitors was Bairam Zadé, the member of the Court of First Instance above referred to. He told me most positively that the destruction of Tatmarash was Djemil Pasha's work, and expressed his fears that further depredations would shortly be committed.

(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 6 in No. 57.

Mr. Wyndham to Mr. Fawcett.

(No. 152.)

Constantinople, December 15, 1884.

Sir,

I INCLOSE you a despatch from Mr. Henderson, and its inclosure, and shall be much obliged if you will inform me before what Tribunal Mr. Dermarcarian, who is a Dragoman to Her Britannic Majesty's Consulate at Aleppo, should institute legal

proceedings to obtain redress for the destruction of his property, and substantiate his charges against the Vali.

You will observe that at the commencement of these outrages Mr. Dermarcarian began to take legal steps, but that they were arrested, apparently, by the influence of Djemil Pasha. I shall be glad of an answer as soon as possible.

I am, &c.

(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 7 in No. 57.

Mr. Fawcett to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 150.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December* 16, 1884.

IN reply to your despatch No. 152 of the 10th December, with the inclosures, requesting information as to the Tribunal before which Mr. Dermarcarian should bring an action for alleged damages to his property near Aleppo, first of all, I should venture to advise Mr. Dermarcarian not to bring an action against Djemil Pasha, because, according to the vague evidence contained in the papers, it will prove very difficult for him to establish his case. He had better attack the persons whom Djemil Pasha is alleged to have employed to destroy Mr. Dermarcarian's property, and leave it to the Court to discover whether the Vali really instigated them or not.

As to the question of competency, it will depend upon the form of action which Mr. Dermarcarian chooses to adopt.

He may sue simply for damages, and then, that being a civil action, he will have to bring it before the Civil Tribunals, or he may sue for violence, assault, &c., and the action being a criminal one, he will have to go before the Criminal Tribunals.

In any case, an action against Djemil Pasha can only be brought before the Council of State. Moreover, I beg to remark that Mr. Dermarcarian has no right to official assistance in this case, because he will have to sue as an owner of real property, and consequently as an Ottoman subject.

I observe also in Mr. Henderson's despatch, and also mentioned in yours, that Mr. Dermarcarian has already commenced an action in some local Court, which action, he states, has been stopped by the influence of the Vali; if this is so he ought to specify the case, and apply to the Embassy to make representation to the Minister of Justice, to give the necessary order to have the case properly carried to a conclusion.

I return the papers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. HENRY FAWCETT,
Consul-General and Judge.

Inclosure 8 in No. 57.

Mr. Wyndham to Consul Henderson.

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 17, 1884.

YOUR despatch No. 57.

Her Majesty's Consul-General and Judge advises plaintiff should not bring action againt Vali, evidence not being sufficient to establish case, but should attack persons alleged to have been employed by his Excellency for destruction of property.

Question of competent Tribunal will depend upon form of action which plaintiff chooses to adopt.

A simple action for damages must be brought before Civil Tribunals; action for violence, assault, &c., before Criminal Tribunals.

Plaintiff has no right to official assistance, as he will have to sue as an owner of real property, and consequently as an Ottoman subject.

As regards action alleged by plaintiff to have been commenced in local Court, and stopped by influence of Vali, case should be specified, and Embassy asked to apply to Ministry of Justice to have action brought to a conclusion.

Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that Minister of Justice has instructed judicial authorities to "do their duty" in the matter.

Inclosure 9 in No. 57.

Mr. Wyndham to Consul Henderson.

Constantinople, December 17, 1884.

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 57 of the 30th November last, I transmit to you herewith, for your information and guidance, a copy of a despatch which I have just received from Mr. Fawcett, Her Majesty's Consul-General and Judge, giving his opinion as to the course to be pursued by Mr. Dermarcarian with regard to the destruction of his property.

I beg especially to call your attention to Mr. Fawcett's observation that, as it is a matter affecting real property, Mr. Dermarcarian is not entitled to official assistance, and that he must consequently sue as an Ottoman subject.

I have, in the meantime, made strong representations on the subject to the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs, who has assured me that the Minister of Justice has instructed the judicial authorities at Aleppo to do their duty.

I propose to forward the whole case in a complete form, up to the present date, to Earl Granville.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 10 in No. 57.

Consul Henderson to Mr. Wyndham.

Aleppo, December 18, 1884, 9·10 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

YOUR telegram of yesterday.

The Procureur-General will arrive in Constantinople on Saturday.

Could Embassy move Minister of Justice to take his opinion as to possibility of my Dragoman or any one else appearing to the Tribunals here on a matter in which the Vali is interested?

The Procureur-General knows the case, and in view of declaration of the Inspector-General of Tribunals, as stated in the Dragoman's Petition of the 15th September, the Minister of Justice, after consulting with Procureur-General, may require to take special measures to obtain a fair Tribunal, or might, as has been done in former cases, send an official of the Ministry of Justice to make an inquiry.

Inclosure 11 in No. 57.

Mr. Wyndham to Consul Henderson.

Constantinople, December 19, 1884, 4·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

YOUR telegram of yesterday.

In an action respecting real property, Dragoman, or other Consular official, cannot demand to be admitted by right, but can of course attend unofficially.

If the Tribunals refuse to entertain suit inform me, and I will then make necessary representations.

Report to me what kind of action plaintiff intends to bring forward.

No. 58.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 24.)

(No. 481. Confidential.)

Constantinople, December 19, 1884.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 480 of to-day's date, I have the honour to report that I have pointed out to Assim Pasha the extreme danger of allowing the Vilayet of Aleppo to fall into a state of anarchy owing to the maladministration of Djemil Pasha, and that I have observed to his Excellency that he had complained to me of Panslavist intrigues in Macedonia; but that he should be on his guard lest the

state of affairs at Aleppo, if allowed to continue and to spread, were not taken advantage of to bring about very serious complications in Syria.

His Excellency entirely agreed with me, that it would be neither wise nor politic to allow matters to fall into a worse state of disorder at Aleppo, but expressed his regret at the difficulties which stood in the way of the Porte's obtaining Djemil Pasha's dismissal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 59.

Assim Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to Earl Granville by Musurus Pasha, December* 27.)

Sublime Porte, le 18 *Décembre*, 1884.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

L'AMBASSADE de Sa Majesté Britannique nous avait dernièrement informé, à titre confidentiel et officieux, qu'un certain Méhemmed Effendi de Névi-Chéhir (Vilayet de Konia) et quatorze autres habitants de la même localité, après avoir embrassé le Protestantisme, étaient arrivés à Constantinople, et avaient été arrêtés et emprisonnés dans la caserne sise entre Beylerbey et Couzgoundjouk, villages de la rive Asiatique du Bosphore. Bien que le fait nous parût invraisemblable, nous n'avons pas manqué de faire ouvrir une enquête. Les investigations dirigées par le Préfet de Police lui-même avec toute l'attention voulue ont établi de la manière la plus positive la fausseté de cette nouvelle.

Nous en avons prévenu l'Ambassade Royale; mais je n'en crois pas moins devoir en faire part également à votre Excellence pour qu'elle veuille bien, le cas échéant, ne pas laisser subsister autour d'elle une pareille croyance.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) M. ASSIM.

No. 60.

Earl Granville to Mr. Wyndham.

Foreign Office, December 29, 1884.

(No. 386.)

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 460 of the 11th instant, in which you ask instructions as to making a further representation to the Porte on the subject of the state of Trebizond; and I have to inform you that, under the circumstances mentioned in that despatch, you may defer making such a representation for a time.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.